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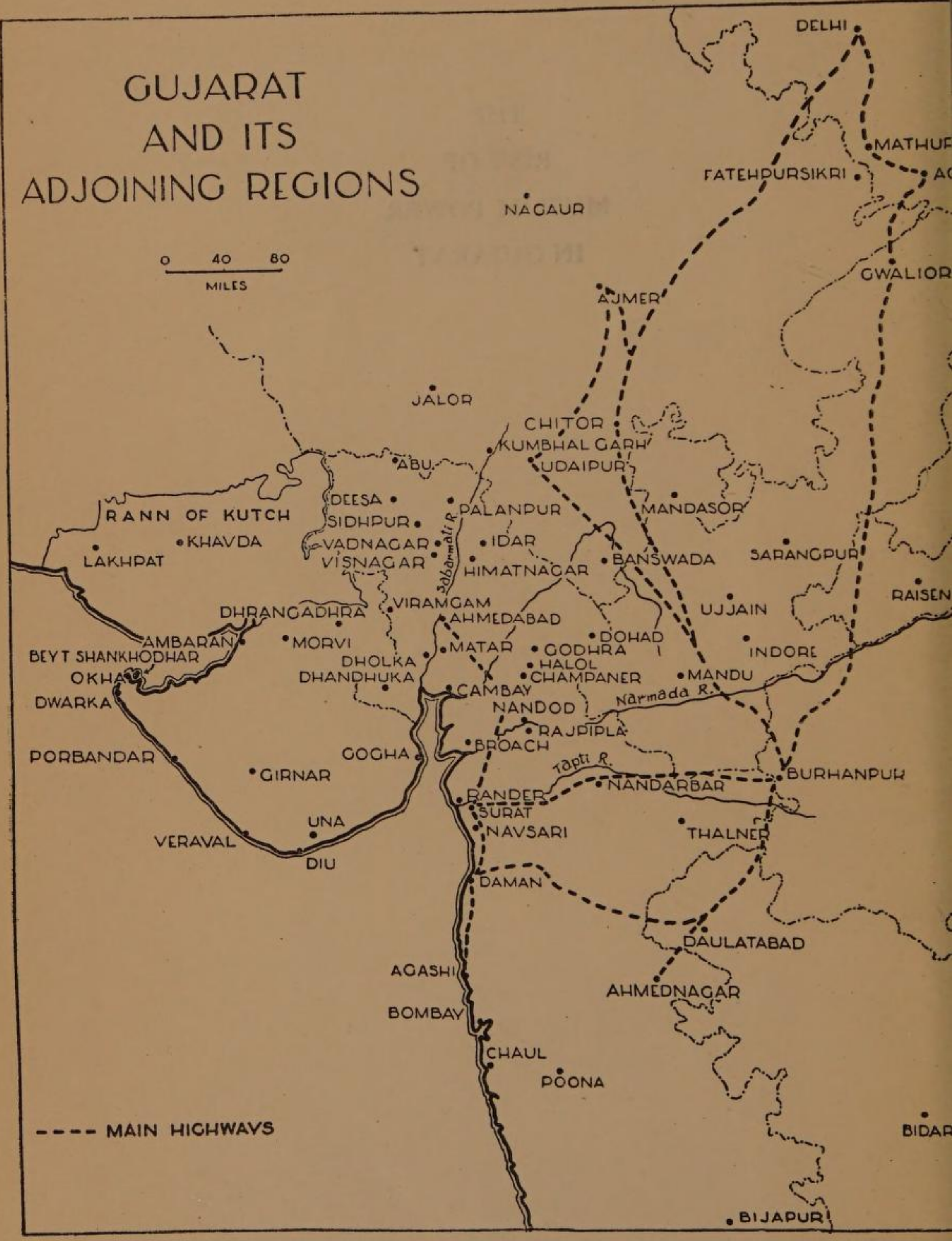
THE
RISE OF
MUSLIM POWER
IN GUJARAT

GUJARAT AND ITS ADJOINING REGIONS



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
THE M. S. UNIVERSITY OF BARODA

The Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat

A HISTORY OF GUJARAT FROM
1298 TO 1442

S. C. MISRA
M.A., PH.D.

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FOREWORD

I HAVE very great pleasure in writing a short preface to Dr. Misra's book on the "Rise of Muslim Power in Gujarat" till the death of Sultan Ahmad Shah. It covers the period from 1297 A. D. to 1441 A. D. The history of Gujarat has not received as much attention from scholars of history as that of the Deccan. To the best of my knowledge, there is no well-written connected history of Gujarat from the earliest times for which we have historical evidence till today.

Forbes in his *Rasmala* has dealt largely with the early history of Gujarat dealing chiefly with the Hindu Rajput rule in the region. *Mirat-i-Sikandiri* and *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* have dealt chiefly with the history of the Sultanate in Gujarat. There has been considerable addition to our sources of knowledge about the history of Gujarat in recent years. Prof. Commissariat has done very useful work in connection with the history of Gujarat. Dr. Misra in this book has covered a part of the field already dealt by him. He has, however, made use of more varied sources and his approach has been more critical. He has availed himself of all the available sources both Persian and Arabic and also the Hindu and Jain sources. The Present volume only takes us from the conquest of Gujarat by 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji to the death of Sultan Ahmad Shah. Apart from a very clear picture of political forces during this period in Delhi and Gujarat, it also gives the reader an idea of the social life of the time and the economic conditions of the people. It gives one a very comprehensive picture of life in Gujarat during the early muslim rule. I hope that this volume will be followed by others dealing with the history of Gujarat till modern times. Dr. Misra deserves our congratulations for this very scholarly work.

J. M. MEHTA
Vice-Chancellor
The M. S. University of Baroda

Baroda-2
24 *July*, 1962

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THIS study was undertaken as a part of the M. S. University Research Project, "History of Gujarat under Muslims: 1298-1750". Under this Project, a critical Edition of the *Mirat-i-Sikandiri* of Sikandar bin Manjhu, was issued last year by the M. S. University, under the joint editorship of the present author and Mr. M. L. Rahman, Lecturer in Persian, the M. S. University.

It is with great pleasure, therefore, that I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the authorities of the M. S. University of Baroda, for their unfailing help and generosity in the cause of research. To Dr. Jyotindra M. Mehta, M.A. (OXON), PH.D (LONDON), Bar-at-Law, my debt is indeed great. Dr. Mehta himself is a keen student of history and, therefore, his interest in this study, as also in historical research, is deep and critical. It is this love for history that made him go through the typescript and very kindly agree to contribute a Foreword to it.

I am also thankful to Shrimati Hansaben Mehta, former Vice-Chancellor, the M. S. University, who was the Vice-Chancellor when work on this Project was begun. To Dr. C. S. Patel, MS. C. (BOM.), PH.D. (LEEDS), I am deeply grateful for the constant help and guidance, so generously afforded by him.

I have also to express my thanks to Prof. Shaikh Abdur Rashid, M.A., former Professor and Head of the Department of History, Muslim University, Aligarh, now Professor and Head of the Department of History, and, Director, Historical Research Institute, University of the Panjab, Lahore, for reading this work in the typescript and making some valuable suggestions. To late Prof. Subba Rao, M.A., PH.D., Professor and Head of the Department of Archaeology, the M. S. University of Baroda, I am indebted for the excellent map, attached to this book.

S. C. MISRA

Oxford
July 31, 1962

ABBREVIATIONS

TFS: *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* of Zia Barni.
FS: *Futuh-u's-Salatin* of 'Isami.
KF: *Khaza'in-u'l-futuh* of Amir Khusrau.
TFS(A): *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi* of Shams Afif.
TMS: *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi* of Yahya Sarhindi.
TMS: *Tarikh-i-Mahmud Shahi* of Mulla 'Abd-u'l Karim Hamdani (In Part III only).
MMS: *Ma'athir-i-Mahmud Shahi* of al-Kirmani.
Rehla: *Rehla* of Ibn Battutah.
TA: *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* of Bakhshi Nizam-u'd-din Ahmad.
GI: *Gulshan-i-Ibrahimi* or *Tarikh-i-Firishtah* of Muhammad Qasim Firishtah.
MS: *Mirat-i-Sikandiri* of Shaikh Sikandar.
MT: *Muntakhab-u't-tawarikh* of 'Abd-u'l Qadir Bada-u'ni.
TSG: *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Gujarat* of Syed Mahmud bin Munawwar-u'l mulk.
MA: *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* of 'Ali Muhammad Khan.
MR: *Ma'athir-i-Rahimi* of Nahawandi.
KdP: *Kanhad-de Prabandh* of Padmanabha.
VVK: *Vividha-tirtha Kalpa* of Jina-prabha Suri
NNP: *Nabhi-nandan-jinod-dhar Prabandh* of Sri Kakka Suri.
Khyat: *Muhnot Nainsi ki Khyat.*

1. Works cited occasionally, have been described in full, in the footnotes concerned.

2. Works by contemporary and near contemporary authors have been cited by their author's name, except in case of well-known classics like *Rasmala* and *Annals*; thus, for instance, Commissariat's *History of Gujarat* has been cited by the author's name.

3. Details of articles, papers, etc. have been given in the footnote concerned and also in the Bibliography.

4. Full details of all important books consulted, are given in the Bibliography.

TRANSLITERATION

ا	—	a	ص	—	s
ب	—	b	ض	—	d
پ	—	p	ط	—	t
ت	—	t	ظ	—	z
ث	—	th	ع	—	'
ج	—	j	غ	—	gh
چ	—	ch	ف	—	f
ح	—	h	ق	—	q
خ	—	kh	ك	—	k
د	—	d	گ	—	g
ذ	—	z	ل	—	l
ر	—	r	م	—	m
ز	—	z	ن	—	n
ژ	—	zh	و	—	w
س	—	s	ه	—	h
ش	—	sh	ی	—	'

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INTRODUCTION

WITH A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN SOURCES

AN ATTEMPT has been made in the following pages, to trace the rise of Muslim power in Gujarat from its inception to the end of the reign of Sultan Ahmad Shah, a period of one hundred and forty-three years, from 1299 to 1442. By the end of this period, the first flush of Muslim rule in Gujarat was over and the pattern of Muslim authority in Gujarat had begun to assume a shape which was peculiar to this land. The dynasty had been stabilized and it was ready to make its individual contribution towards Indo-Muslim culture.

The initial phase, the period of incubation before the efflorescence, is the one studied here. During this age, significant changes occurred in the socio-political balance. Turkish conquerors had occupied, within a brief span, the entire Indo-Gangetic basin, establishing a superficial suzerainty which did not penetrate to the lower levels of authority. This exuberant task was rapidly and efficiently performed by the Turkish oligarchy—but before it could organise its conquests or fan out into wider areas, it collapsed, primarily due to its internal dissensions.

With 'Ala-u'd-din commenced a period of horizontal and vertical implementation of their authority by the rulers. Both the South and the West were compelled to bow to the conquerors; the middlemen in the *doab* lands, for the first time, discovered their offices threatened and even taken away. Yet, 'Ala-u'd-din, though a tyrant, was a realist. He did not attempt to overstep the limits of geography by appropriating what could best be left to the man on the spot. In Gujarat, therefore, Turkish rule led to the rise of a new oligarchy which effectively displaced the Rajput at the apex of the political order.

As had taken place in the northern plains, a century before, the secondary tier of Rajput rulers remained, by and far, unbroken. Numerous nucleii thus survived the onslaught, bitterly hostile to the new regime. Of necessity, the efforts of the new rulers were limited to the neutralization of the "tallest poppies"; the rest had to be left undisturbed. Muslim rule remained urban, superficial and distant.

The first governor of Gujarat was a statesman. His death however, was the signal for a bitter internecine feud which ended only

with the relatively supine reign of Firuz Tughuluq. By then the rulers had lost both the initiative and the energy to undertake anything more than routine duties. This therefore was the period of Rajput revival. Muhammad bin Tughuluq discovered this reality on his arrival in Gujarat and in his fitful way made an attempt to check it. He spent three years in Gujarat and two in Saurashtra. He held court at Junagadh and Rajput chieftains acknowledged him; but no sooner was his back turned, the transient authority evaporated.

In fact, so long as the centre of political power remained in Delhi, real implementation of Muslim authority in outlying areas was a near impossibility. To achieve that, a regime oriented to the region in which it operated, was required; the difficulties were otherwise too great, the initiative required from short-term governors, who had their eyes focused at the power-game in the capital, too much. Moreover, the land vital for the Sultanate of Delhi, was the Gangetic *doab*, the Heartland on which the Sultan depended for his revenues. The rest were accretions, necessary for power and for strength but not vital. After all, the size of an effective unit is conditioned by the means of communication and transport; and the fourteenth century was an age of horsemen and footmen, traversing unforded rivers and abominable roads.

Effective control over the land, therefore, commenced with the establishment of the Sultanate of Gujarat. The Sultans of Gujarat could permit the latitude allowed by their predecessors, only at their peril—and they needed more and more money for themselves. The long-delayed struggle therefore commenced, the Rajput-Muslim duel for the land. The conflict was both long and painful; it was not until the decisive campaigns of Sultan Mahmud Begada that the Muslim rulers secured a decisive advantage.

Even then, a pattern was visible—a scale of subjugation. The landholders near the capital were the most affected for they bore the brunt of the attack. Those in Saurashtra, in south Gujarat and in border areas had these harsh blows softened by distance—and stuck stubbornly to their patrimony. Bigger Rajput states near the capital—Nandot and Idar—were compelled to bow though Champanir was destroyed in the mainland and Junagadh in the peninsula, for they represented the most potent threats to the Sultans. Less dangerous states were however allowed to continue and even became allies as time and necessity compelled them both to co-exist.

Even in areas where the maximum expropriation took place, namely in central Gujarat, the Rajput landholders succeeded in retaining part of their land under the *wanta* tenure. As such they were reconciled to the new regime. But by the time this conciliation could be effected, a veritable transformation had taken place; many Rajputs had accepted Islam and a new class of landowners had come into existence.

This work is an attempt primarily at political history, which inevitably becomes an analysis of political power. A *resumé* of this aspect, may therefore be indicated here.

The Sultanate, as noted before, began as a thinly veiled oligarchy. It achieved its peak of efficiency under Iltutmish, when the hand which held the lever was both steady and respected. His successors failed in the task; the oligarchy made an attempt to wield power collectively by placing puppets on the throne. In thirteenth century India, however, power could not be exercised by proxy and in this effort, the *Chehelgan* worked out their end. The climb to despotism was begun by Balban but he remained too dependent on his fellow Turks to ignore them. To create a counterpoise, he inducted other elements in the ruling class—the Khaljis and in secondary tiers, the Afghans. Despite his attempts, Balban could achieve only the revitalization of the Sultanate and of the idea of kingship.

Despotism as unbridled personal rule began with 'Ala-u'd-din. Freed from most moral inhibitions by the inhuman crime which placed him on the throne, 'Ala-u'd-din proved himself to be a pragmatist. To him, his own interests came first and those of his Sultanate, next. He made his adherents into a new nobility and while he sheared the privileges of the older aristocracy, to this new creation, he entrusted first the conquest and then the governance of his far-flung empire. His methods were undoubtedly crude, but about his success, there could be no doubt.

Despotism, however, is by nature a limited tool. It can compel obedience, it cannot win co-operation. It can maintain *status quo*, but cannot affect deeply-integrated social and economic patterns. It can destroy but it cannot create. These were the frontiers of personal rule which the far more learned successor of 'Ala-u'd-din, Muhammad bin Tughuluq, overlooked. The judicious balance was given up, the distinction between central and distant regions was

forgotten, individuality was interpreted as defiance and an impossible uniformity emanating from the person of the Sultan was sought to be imposed. The effort shattered the Sultanate.

Above all, Muhammad bin Tughuluq failed to perceive that the basic integers of Indian economy, the villages, were independent of his authority and as such beyond his control. He could destroy a village but he could not build one; he could wreck a village administration but he could not create one. His unfortunate meddling with this rigid and traditional set-up did not make it amenable to his control; it merely broke the link between the rulers and the ruled at its most vital point.

The rise of the Bahmanides marks the end of an era and the beginning of another. The reign of Firuz Tughuluq, the last ruler to claim an all-India authority, was the afternoon of the Sultanate, long, quiet and peaceful, but also weak, unenterprising and declining. The provincial governors became independent in all but name and the last of them in Gujarat was in process of disowning even that when he was supplanted by another who ultimately broke the tie.

Zafar Khan, the founder of the dynasty in Gujarat, proved himself a keen legitimist. It was with reluctance that he had assumed independence, when even the fiction of allegiance could not be maintained. His prime objective was to create precedents which would facilitate transfers of power typified in succession and avoid disputes which flung the entire structure into a sudden whirl. Partly, he succeeded; Gujarat did not know a change in dynasty till its conquest by Akbar. Partly, he failed; he was imprisoned by his son and poisoned by his grandson.

Legitimacy in fact is impossible to achieve in a political environment where power is total and personal; only when kingship becomes limited does succession become legal. Not only did medieval monarchies find the problem beyond their ken, but modern totalitarian states have also not fared any better in this respect.

Ahmad Shah is said to have mourned this youthful crime for the rest of his life. However, his succession was undisputed though a barrage of rebellions faced him immediately after. The sequence of the rebels was significant: the cousins of the Sultan, with claims to the throne, first; then nobles; then nobles supported by Rajputs; and finally, a combination aided by external rulers. To assert

himself, Ahmad Shah had to fight his way through; the man of the future, the conqueror and the bigot was moulded by these initial difficulties.

By this time, Gujarat was ringed round by a number of independent states, Malwa to the east, Khandesh to the south-east and the Bahmanides to the south. To the north was Rajasthan which had known Muslim rule only on the periphery and that too fitfully. Among these states, developed a mode of behaviour and pattern of relationships which was fully understood by all of them. Moreover, the archetype of patterns between several relatively equal states—the balance of power—was attempted at by these several states. The pattern took shape under the first two Sultans of Gujarat, and came to a climax a century later under the last important Sultan of this land.

Thus, an early conflict presaged the duel between the two neighbours, Gujarat and Malwa. Khandesh, the buffer State between Gujarat, Malwa and the Bahmanides, judged, not incorrectly, Gujarat to be the most powerful, and sided variously with its opponents, Malwa and Bahmanides, until its ultimate surrender to Gujarat. The Bahmanides were too greatly preoccupied with their constant conflict with Vijayanagar to pay serious attention to the north; even then, the area around modern Bombay formed a bone of contention between them and Gujarat.

With Rajasthan, the two states Malwa and Gujarat had shifting alliances. Mewar was the state most in contact with its southern neighbours; and generally, it could be perceived that an alliance against the stronger party was formed by the other two to keep it from getting too powerful. Bahadur Shah overcame both Malwa and Mewar; his was the last flicker before the lamp went out altogether.

A Critique Of The Source Material

The bulk of information for the history of the Sultanate of Delhi and its successor in Gujarat, is furnished by Persian histories. The first of these to be written in India, was Qazi Minhaj-u's-Siraj's monumental *Tabaqat-i-Nasiri*. The *Tabaqat* was primarily concerned with Central Asia, the Turkish homeland, but the extension of Turkish rule to northern India made the learned Qazi to write a notable section on that too. In this sphere, however,

Minhaj-u's-Siraj, was too close to the events, too biased to present anything but a picture which was at best not free from the charge of distortion. His antipathy to Raihan and his adulation of Balban are unjust to both. His account of the reign of Raziya is tantalizingly brief. Nevertheless, the *Tabaqat* is probably the *only* primary source of information for this age: and in Major Raverty, Minhaj found a translator worthy of his task.

Where Minhaj concluded, Barni began; a break of six years, one of the dark spots of Indian history divides the two. Rare indeed is the history which has enjoyed a reputation so sustained as his *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, the history which began with Balban's accession in 1266 and ended with Muhammad bin Tughuluq's death in 1352.

Zia Barni was by no means a perfect historian. His work, in fact, is riddled with defects. He was incorrigibly prejudiced, bigoted and obstinate; he was ignorant of military affairs; he wrote this history when old age had begun to tell upon his memory and the result is that it is full of rambling details but scarce in dates. Above all, he failed to understand and therefore could not present adequately the personality of the Sultan to whom he was very close.

Many other strictures can be passed on Barni's work. Till recently, however, he was the only known historian to have given a coherent, reasonably detailed and on the whole an authentic account of his age. The great quality of Barni is his sincerity. For him, his *Tarikh* was the medium through which he got rid of his suppressed tensions, a diary which was the image of his self and a release of his pent-up, emotions. Besides, he instituted a diligent search for the past and faithfully recorded what he learnt. He is obvious in his admiration of both Balban and 'Ala-u'd-din and there is always an unspoken comparison of these great figures with the one on the throne. Muhammad bin Tughuluq not only shocked and frightened Barni—he bewildered him too.

It was an advantage that Barni was opinionated and that too heavily. Prejudice is natural in a person of strong and dominant convictions. If, therefore, his prejudices prevented Barni from seeing a *kafir* as anything other than a *kafir*, he kept the reader in no illusions about it. He thought and felt as a man of his station, in his age, would have thought and felt; and it is a tremendous advantage that he wrote freely without assuming airs, as a lesser man would have done.

With all his defects, his shortcomings, his narrowmindedness, Barni is a stimulating historian. He recreates the picture of his age almost without effort; his stories, dialogues and his own remarks and observations bring about an atmosphere which is at once redolent with the spirit of that era.

It is fortunate for Barni that another work of the same period has recently come to light. Isami's *Shahnama-i-Hind* or, as it is better known, the *Futuh-u's-Salatin*, is an attempt to tell the story of the Sultans of Delhi on the lines of the great *Shahnamah*, and Isami's work is therefore in verse.

This ambitious attempt was inscribed by Isami to the first Sultan of the Bahmani dynasty, 'Ala-u'd-din Bahman Shah. Isami had to flee Delhi probably to escape the volcanic rage of the Sultan or was exiled at the Sultan's orders and he is none too kind to Muhammad bin Tughuluq, going to the extent of heaping on him the worst epithets he could find—including the charge of being a heretic. He is much more hostile to Muhammad bin Tughuluq than Barni; but his work, though not more detailed than Barni's, is an excellent companion, filling the gaps and providing a fresh viewpoint. He mentions facts either not known or imperfectly known to Barni and his grasp of military matters is definitely superior to Barni's. For Gujarat and the Deccan, this work is specially valuable; for he wrote in the Deccan and was better acquainted with the events which took place here.

For instance, Isami supports Khusrau's version of *two* invasions of Gujarat and mentions the last asylum of Raja Karna. He describes in detail the rebellion which took place in Gujarat after Alp Khan's assassination and also the Afghan revolt during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughuluq. He gives dates and more often mentions the interval of time between two events. In many cases, Isami is therefore a first-rate independent authority, superior to Barni by virtue of his local knowledge and better accessibility to facts.

The monumental works of Amir Khusrau which punctuate the reigns of the Sultans of Delhi from Balban to Tughuluq Shah are a source material, equal, if not greater, to the histories written by Barni and Isami. Especially they are a mine of information on the ethical beliefs, political convictions and the social system of that age. His historical *mathnawis*, *Qiran-u's-sa'dain*, *Miftah-u'l-futuh*, *Dewal Rani-Khizr Khan*, *Nuh Sipihr* and the *Tughuluq-namah* are an epitome of the great age of the Sultans. Equally

important is *Matla-u'n-anwar*, Khusrau's work on morals and the *Khaza'in-u'l futuh*, his account in prose of the conquests of 'Ala-u'd-din.

It is impossible to do even bare justice to Khusrau's work and its value in a space as limited as this; only an enumeration is therefore attempted. Despite the great amount of work which has been done both in Urdu and English, on Amir Khusrau, one is left with the feeling that the great poet has not been sufficiently exploited. His works, prose, historical *mathnawis* and poetry, contain a mine of information pertaining to the social and cultural history of that age.

The religious ferment which was then being felt by *sufis* is reflected in significant works of the saint, who ranks among the greatest India has produced. Muhammad bin Mubarak Kirmani's, *Siyar-u'l-auliya* and Amir Hasan Sijzi's *Fawaid-u'l-Fuwud*, the former a biography and the latter a collection of the author's 'table-talks' give an idea not only of their religious thoughts but also of their relation with the political authority.

For Muhammad bin Tughuluq's reign, a contemporary document, *Insha-i-Mahru* of 'Ain-u'l-mulk throws a great deal of light on his relations with his lieutenants.

Sultan Firuz Shah's reign has been recorded in two voluminous histories. Shams Siraj takes up the story in his *Tarikh-i-Firuz Shahi*, at the point where Barni left off, namely, with the accession of Firuz Shah. This work is a first-rate account of the campaigns, political history and the institutions of the period. His description of the travails undergone by Firuz Shah's army in its trek across the Runn, is graphic; his narration of Damaghani's ventures is an illuminating study of the atrophy which had overtaken the administrative system in the reign of Firuz Shah.

The other work, *Sirat-i-Firuz Shahi*, is more of an encyclopaedia of the arts and crafts of India, than a political history. Its value from this point of view is therefore unrivalled.

Equally significant is another document belonging to this period. It is nothing less than a personal testament by the Sultan himself of his beliefs and measures. The *Futuhat-i-Firuz Shahi* is a record not only of his measures, some praiseworthy and others hardly so, but an insight into the mentality of the last of the all-India Sultans. As the only testament of a ruler in medieval India, if the memoir of Muhammad bin Tughuluq, a document not beyond suspicion, is excepted, this work is unique and of unrivalled value.

Historiography fell into desuetude after the invasion of Timur like everything else. The era of the Syeds produced only a single work of outstanding importance—Yahya bin Sarhindi's *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*. Yahya's account of the preceding ages is rather sketchy but his dates are accurate and reliable, being often corroborated by independent sources. After him, medieval India knew no historian till the great Renaissance under Akbar broke the silence of a hundred years.

Dynasties which succeeded the Sultanate of Delhi had their own histories written in their kingdoms. Of special interest to the student of the history of Gujarat, are the histories pertaining to the Sultanates of Gujarat and Malwa and the Bahmani kingdom.

Much of the work pertaining to the history of the Sultans of Gujarat has been lost. Such for instance was Husam Khan's *Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi*, which is said to have been a record which began with Firuz Shah and ended with Bahadur Shah. Such also were Hulwi Shirazi's panagyric *Tarikh-i-Ahmad Shahi* and Aram Kashmiri's *Tuhfat-u's-sadat*. Only in pages of later historians like Sikandar, Nizam-u'd-din and Firishtah, do these authors live.

Fortunately, one such work has survived in two manuscripts—the *Tarikh-i-Mahmud Shahi* of Maulana 'Abd-u'l Karim Hamdani, a Bahmani scholar who stayed in Gujarat for some time but later returned to his land. Sikandar does not seem to have had a high opinion of this work. He cites it only twice and that too in events which deal with Tatar Khan—and here he is of the opinion that its author had wasted great eloquence on camouflaging the truth. This happens to be true; on other occasions too, as for instance, regarding the relations of Ahmad Shah with his Bahmani counterpart, *Mahmud Shahi's* version is vague and all too brief.

The language moreover is often convoluted; it becomes confused when the author attempts to be elegant. At most places, however, it is understandable. The annalistic form which the author took up makes him break off the narrative sometime in the middle, though so far as Gujarat is concerned, it is faithfully taken up in the next year.

Undoubtedly, the value of *Mahmud Shahi* as a contemporary account is great, not only for Gujarat and India as a whole, but also for Central Asia, Persia and the Arab world. But so far as details are concerned, it is scarcely rewarding, especially for the

earlier reigns. Later writers like Nizam-u'd-din, Firishtah and Sikandar appear to have sucked it dry and their accounts are clearer and more detailed than the one furnished by this work.

Only one additional contemporary work has come to light, namely, the *Zamimah-i-Ma'thir-i-Mahmud Shahi* which begins with Mahmud Shah Begda. Indubitably, the *Bahadur Shahi* too was concerned with this period before Mahmud Shah Begda, but that we know only through the pages of later histories.

In marked contrast with the rambling history of Maulana 'Abdu'l-Karim Hamdani, stands the official history of the greatest of the Malwa Sultans, al-Kirmani's *Ma'thir-i-Mahmud Shahi*. The *Ma'thir* has all the virtues and all the failings of an inspired court history; it is florid, verbose and exhaustive. It is meticulous in details which serve to glorify its heroes and its paens are usually hyperbolic; it moralises at wearisome length; but it slurs and passes over facts which do not reflect favourably on the Sultans of Malwa. It ignores the defeats Hoshang Shah sustained at the hands of Ahmad Shah, except for a sentence and that too inaccurate. In al-Kirmani's opinion, it was not generosity which made Muzaffar Shah restore Hoshang Shah to his throne; it was his inability to hold Malwa. It may be true; but it does not appear well in the annalist of Hoshang Shah to say so.

For the historian of Malwa, particularly the one concerned with Mahmud Shah Khalji, this history should prove invaluable, should he have the patience to wade through its seven to eight hundred pages, written in immaculate, beautiful *nastaliq*. To the historian of Gujarat, it appears one-sided—though with the advantage that it gives the other side of the picture so well.

Before passing on to later histories, written in the age of the Mughals, the accounts of the Travellers who came to India in this period, may be attended to.

The very word *traveller* here serves to bring to mind the delightful peregrinations of the indefatigable Moorish traveller who visited India in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughuluq. Ibn Battutah's account of India and its unparalleled value is too well-known to need repetition. For observation, keen and microscopic, and for memory, prodigious and unfailing though slightly hazy at the edges, Ibn Battutah had no peer in medieval India.

While in this land, Ibn Battutah enjoyed the hospitality of nume-

rous persons, including the perilous one of the Sultan. He visited Gujarat and came to Khambhat (Cambay). He was therefore aware of many facts which the later historians or those concerned with the rarified atmosphere of the Court, did not know or considered too insignificant to record. These slight details, the brief glimpses of the system and its functioning, form the most valuable part of the *Rehla*; for Gujarat history, to cite an instance, his account of the Afghan rebellion in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughuluq is invaluable.

In other respects too the *Rehla* is fascinating as only the travelogue of a well-seasoned, good-humoured traveller can be. No doubt, he could not fathom the Sultan, whose partiality rather frightened him; but could those, who were even nearer, succeed in doing so?

Other works of similar strain were not primarily travelogues. The first is Wassaf's *Taziyat-u'l-amsar* and the other, Ahmad Abbas's, *Masalik-u'l-absar*. Wassaf gives us a glowing description of India in the beginning of the fourteenth century and an equally colourful description of Gujarat on the eve of Turkish attack. He also furnishes us with an accurate account of the first invasion of Gujarat.

Ahmad Abbas of Damascus did not personally visit India but gathered his material from travellers who did. He gives a description of the hierarchy on which the Turkish oligarchy was based, namely, in what way the ranks of *khans*, *maliks*, *sipahsalar* and the rest, was organised and how it functioned. It is this analysis which makes this work extremely valuable for the history of Delhi Sultanate.

Historiography experienced, like literature, art and architecture, a renaissance in the age of Akbar. Almost all the major histories were written either in the age of Akbar or in its continuation in the reign of Jahangir.

For gazetteer-like factuality and correctness, it is difficult to surpass Nizam-u'd-din Bakhshi's *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*. This celebrated work has justly won a name for itself. For regional histories, especially those of Gujarat, Malwa and the Bahmani empire, Nizam-u'd-din consulted almost all the available histories. His account of the campaigns of Ahmad Shah is, therefore, detailed and meticulous; he is not wholly sure of the part played by Zafar Khan in getting his son poisoned or of the guilt of Ahmad Shah in forcing his

grand-father to take the fatal draught; he is therefore reluctant to force the scandal out into the open. Nizam-u'd-din is conservative and reliable; he would rather omit a fact than state it on dubious authority.

Similar in strain but less restrained, is the famous history of Muhammad Qasim Firishtah which he called *Gulshan-i-Ibrahimi* but which has commonly come to be known as *Tarikh-i-Firishtah*. Firishtah utilised the same sources as his predecessor and also relied heavily on his work: but he wrote in the Deccan, and had the truly medieval penchant for the baffling and the obscure. He therefore attempts to bring the skeletons out of the cupboard, for instance, pertaining to Tatar Khan and his father's death. This predilection sometimes carries Firishtah into error; for example, his statement that Raja Karna founded a kingdom in Baglana which was invaded later by Malik Kafur, is nothing more than a figment of his imagination.

At other places, where he is following the standard histories available to him, Firishtah is a first-rate authority, sometimes more detailed than Nizam-u'd-din. He is very reliable for the affairs in the Deccan, for instance, regarding the relations of Ahmad Shah with Ahmad Shah Bahmani.

Closely paralleling the above works is the *magnum opus* of Mughal historiography—the *Tarikh-i-Alfi* begun by Mulla Ahmad Thattawi and completed by Asaf Khan. Fresh information is rarely available in the *Alfi* but it very often corroborates other histories. Its annalistic form also makes it especially valuable for chronology.

Valuable not primarily for facts but for the approach, is Bada-u'ni's *Muntakhab-u't-tawarikh*. This acid historian is the chronicler of Akbar *par excellence*; the earlier ages were for him the prologues of the great drama he set out to record. Nevertheless, he attempts to sketch not only the political but also the literary and religious history of the Sultanate. Bada-ụ'ni did not deal with Gujarat but his history is very valuable for the earlier phase.

For the history of the Sultanate, other works like Abu'l Fazl's *Akbarnama* and *'Ain-i-Akbari* and Nahawandi's *Ma'athir-i-Rahimi* are not important sources of information. The *A'in* is however very valuable for topographical and statistical data, the earliest available for this age.

Regional historiography also came into its own in the age of Akbar.

For Gujarat, its most important history came to be written by the end of the great reign and can be said to have been 'out' in the reign of Jahangir.

The *Mirat-i-Sikandari* has, since it was written, become the *vade-mecum* for the history of the Sultans of Gujarat. This distinction it came to acquire so effectively that while its copies have multiplied in all libraries, it is difficult to find the manuscripts of its predecessors. The *Bahadur Shahi* seems to have been irretrievably lost. Later writers like Nahawandi and Ali Muhammad Khan merely summarised Sikandar's work and Sikandar came to be regarded as the *only* historian dealing with Gujarat.

As he declares in the beginning of his work, Sikandar wrote to remove many of the misconceptions current regarding the Sultans of Gujarat, and because the historians of this dynasty had lived in the reigns of the Sultans whose actions they recorded, they did not dare to tell the truth. As one reads his work however, one gets a feeling that this was not the sole purpose; Sikandar meant also to exalt his patrons, the Syeds of Batwa and their successors in Dholkah.

Sikandar's work is sketchy in its accounts of the early Sultans; he has condensed the latter portion of the reign of Ahmad Shah in only a sentence or two, omitting completely his relations with Ahmad Shah Bahmani. Later, when he comes to depend on *Bahadur Shahi*, he is on firmer grounds. But it is really in the reigns of Mahmud Shah III and his successors, where he is dealing with the immediate past, that Sikandar comes into his own. His father and elder brother were among the lieutenants of Syed Mubarak and Syed Miran of Dholkah and he himself witnessed the entry of Akbar in Gujarat.

The most valuable part of Sikandar's work is not his historical narrative but the numerous stories, anecdotes and sidelights with which he has garnished his work. From these, a picture of the age emerges so realistically that it would have been difficult to achieve the same effect by a factual narrative.

Two other works, written in the same period, refer to the early Sultans of Gujarat. The first is the only secular Arabic history written in India—the *Zafar-u'l-walih bi Muzaffar wa alih* of 'Abd-u'l-lah Muhammad bin Umar al-Makki, al-Asafi Ulugh-Khani, better known as Haji-u'd-dabir. Like Sikandar, or even more so, Haji is sparse regarding the early Sultans; he used primarily the

same sources as Sikandar and discovered the *Mirat* when his work was nearly complete. Though an authority of great value, this paucity of information makes the *Zafar-u'l-walih*, a work of not very great importance for this period.

Of equal value is the 22-page fragment, the *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Gujarat* written by Syed Mahmud bin Munawwar-u'l-mulk Bukhari. It is more a scrap-book than a historical work, recording sundry bits of information in a haphazard fashion. It is valuable for dates and it states definitely that Ahmad Shah poisoned his grandfather.

Finally, the 18th century saw another great history of medieval or rather Mughal Gujarat—'Ali Muhammad Khan's *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*. 'Ali Muhamad's work is nothing more than a condensation of Sikandar's; he however gives some additional facts about revenue and land administration.

The story from the "other side" is given by Rajput and Jain writers. The impact of the invaders which toppled an existing order naturally elicited a number of works, but most of them concerned themselves with isolated rulers who had experienced the shock. For Gujarat, the most important single source of information on the Rajputs, is the famous *Rasmala* of Alexander Kinloch Forbes. Forbes did for Gujarat, what Tod had done for Rajasthan, Grant Duff for Maharashtra and Malcolm for Malwa. Tales of Rajput valour and heroism which held Forbes spellbound, did not however blind him to the merits of another order. His sympathies were naturally with the sufferers; he was unfavourably disposed towards their conquerors but he attempted to be fair to them.

The most valuable part of his work is the information which Forbes collected from the bards; of lesser value is that which he derived from garbled translations of Persian histories like *Tarikh-i-Firishtah* and *Mirat-i-Sikandiri*. Sometimes, as in the case of the Deval Rani incident, Forbes has fused the two accounts into one, and, therefore, caution is required in using this part.

Despite his engrossment in the Rajput lore, Forbes had a deep appreciation of the peace brought to this land by the "sea-dwelling strangers"—his own people. To him, the imposition of British rule ended a centuries-old civil war; "from the time the sceptre was struck down from the hands of Bhimadeva II to the long distant period when Rajputs, Moslems and the Mahrattas, agreed at length to sheathe their swords and to repose for the just arbiter-

ment on the power, wisdom and the faith of the 'sea-dwelling stranger', Gujarat did not remain for one hour unwounded by domestic strife." It is possible to exaggerate the communal tension, undoubtedly present in this country.

Rajasthan and Gujarat came in close contact and therefore the history of the former had an immediate bearing on the latter. The pioneer work in Rajput history, Tod's *Annals and Antiquites of Rajasthan*, partakes more of the nature of a saga than that of history. Yet, it is an important and sometimes an indispensable work of reference.

Tod's work was taken up and amplified by the great historian of nineteenth century Mewar—Kaviraja Shyamaldas. His work, the *Vir Vinod* is a compendium of Rajasthan—a topographical, historical and political account of the different states of the then Rajasthan. The outline it sketched was filled in by later writers.

Among modern historians of Rajasthan, the name of Pandit Gaurishankar Hirachand Ojha stands out prominently. In his multivolumed, monumental *History of Rajputana*, Pandit Ojha told the story of every major state in Rajasthan. Much of the material for this huge undertaking—epigraphic, matrological and literary—was unearthed in laborious field-work by Ojha himself. In parts Ojha might be surpassed; it is difficult to go beyond his compass.

Only a few of the *khyats*, the Rajput chronicles, have been published. Of these the most important is the *Muhnot Nainsi ki khyat*, written by the court poet of Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and known after his name. Nainsi's *khyat* is a compendium of Rajput lore; its history is sometimes too heavily encrusted with legend. Yet it is true reflection of Rajput culture and attitudes; its value as history too is great, if not unimpeachable.

Other Rajput works deal with specific incidents and situations. Padmanabha's *Kanhad-de Prabandh*, a sixteenth century *kavya* written in old Gujarati, records the traditional version of the valiant fight put up by Kanhad-dev of Jalor against 'Ala-u'd-din. The fifteenth century Sanskrit *kavya Hammir Mahakavya* and the nineteenth century, Kavi Jodha's *Hammir-Raso* tell a similar story of Hammir of Ranthambhore's resistance to 'Ala-u'd-din. Almost all these *kavyas* are more eulogies than sober history.

Of a different type is the *Mandalik Kavya* which tells the story of the early life of Raja Mandalik of Junagadh who fought against Mahmud Begda. For this period however, it is of little value. Another work of this type is *Ranmal Chhand* which gives a tradi-

tional version of the several attacks on Idar by Zafar Khan.

The Jains in Gujarat too felt the impact to Turkish invasion and were among the first to come to terms with them. A very contemporary record of the first Turkish attack is furnished by Jinaprabha Suri in his *Vivdha Tirtha-kalpa*, one of the earliest references to this attack. The destruction of some of the temples in Shatrunjaya, however, elicited a much keener pang; and in two *kavyas*, the story of their restoration by a Jain savant, Samra Sah or Samar Singh, has been narrated.

The first, *Samra-Rasu* is short and is written in old Gujarati. The Other *Nabhinandan jino-ddhar Prabandh* is much longer and is written in Sanskrit. Both of them describe the pain felt by the Jain community at the destruction of their sacred places and the achievements of Samra Sah, a rich merchant of Patan high in the favour of Alp Khan, in restoring them with the benediction of the governor. The pomp and ceremonies which attended the restoration are described in great detail.

Not only do these works reflect the statesmanlike policy of the first governor of Gujarat and throw a flood of light on the cultural and social make-up of the Jain community in the 14th-15th centuries, but also reveal the significant differences in the response afforded to the invasion by different communities, primarily due to their occupation and function. The distance between the different communities, their isolation from each other appears greatly magnified by these works.

The efforts made by Jain savants to win recognition from the Sultans of Delhi and the favour accorded to them by Muhammad bin Tughuluq and his successor Firuz Shah is the subject matter of Pandit Lalchandra Bhagwan Gandhi's small work, *Jina-prabha Suri anê Sultan Muhammad Tughuluq*. This work opens an entirely new venue for research by revealing the patterns of contacts which have been obscured by too great an emphasis on Persian histories.

These are the major works which have gone into the making of this monograph. Other books wherever referred to, have been cited in the footnotes and included in the bibliography. It may be referred to for details regarding any book not mentioned in this critical analysis.

Part I

THE SULTANATE OF DELHI

Chapter I

FOUNDATION OF MUSLIM RULE IN DELHI

The Arab Invasion—Mahmud of Gazhna—Muhammad of Ghor—Albari Turks: the Oligarchy—Oligarchy: policies, internal and external—Oligarchy: its breakdown—Balban: his role—Balban: end of Albari rule.

THE ADVENT of Muslims in India marked a turning point in her history. It was the end of an age and the beginning of another. A new factor, at once unpredictable and yet deeply significant, was introduced into the fabric of Indian society and politics.

A dual process was the consequence. The old ruling order, the Rajput aristocracy, was slowly but inexorably displaced from the position of vantage and its place was taken by the foreign Muslims. Except in refuge areas like Rajasthan and the Central Indian highlands, where also they felt the threat, Rajput rulers all over north India yielded place to the invaders. The political history of north India for nearly three centuries is the history of this conflict, the struggle between the Rajput and the Turk for the possession of land.

The existing social order was also affected significantly. Considerable sections of the people went over to the new faith, thus introducing a new and utterly alien element into an already deeply fissured society. This new formation was not only foreign but also hostile to the existing social order; unlike the past, not a new caste but a new social system came into being with the intrusion of this foreign element.

Linked with the social change, was the religious ferment, the necessary corollary of the new faith, of its basic tenets and of the missionary fervour of its votaries. The challenge to the existing cultural patterns was immediate and demanding. New answers had to be discovered for new problems, if existing values were to be upheld.

On every plane therefore—political, social and religious—the advent of the Turks inaugurated a new age of conflict, stress and consequent rejuvenation in India. A new creative age was the

result. The rise of syncretic faiths, highly mysticised poetry full of utter abandon, a revolution in music and plastic arts, Indo-Muslim architecture and above all Indo-Muslim civilisation in all its diverse social and political aspects—all of these were the forms which the response to the challenge took, the solutions afforded to the problems posed.

The political process, to repeat, was characterised by the displacement of the Rajput ruling order by the Turk. This conflict continued unabated till Akbar found an answer to it. The displacement, however, was only at the surface; at the lower echelons of the ruling hierarchy, the infiltration of the new element was slow and hesitant. By and far, the new rulers accepted the prevailing framework and utilised it for their own ends. They did attempt to extend the area of control vertically as they did horizontally; but in this effort, the area of their operations was limited drastically by the primitive means of transport and communication and the brittle nature of the medieval administrative machinery.

It is necessary to keep these factors in mind. Turkish rule in India was primarily military rule and had no support in the country, except in towns and that too limited. It was a military oligarchy which relied upon its own efficiency for its rule. Moreover, difficulties of movement and communication not only limited their operations but determined objectives and affected trends of political thought. The Sultans thought in terms of *Hindustan* which to them meant the *Madhyadesha* of Ancient India, the region now equivalent to western Uttar Pradesh. This was the kernel of their authority, the Heartland of their Sultanate. The rest were conquests, piecemeal accretions which were necessary but not indispensable. It is significant that it was to this Heartland that the Sultanate shrunk when overtaken by decay, after the death of Firuz Tughuluq.

Areas other than this vital land, necessarily knew less central control than the one applied to it. Provincial governors enjoyed great latitude in their assignments, a freedom which could never have been permitted in the Heartland or in the much closer crown territories, the *khalsah* lands. The pattern of rule was therefore far from uniform; even in the reign of 'Ala-u'd-din when the attempts at streamlining the administration had commenced, the areas which owned allegiance to Delhi were varied and dissimilar—from Deogir under Ramdeo which simply paid a tribute, to Gujarat which was virtually autonomous under a trusted noble, to the

khalsah land which was laid under duress to meet the demands of the capital.

Muhammad bin Tughuluq made attempts to break through these limitations to assert his authority over the entire sprawling land mass: the consequence was that the Sultanate was shattered. The provinces could not be subjected to the treatment, the Heartland could be. A sharp distinction has therefore to be drawn between the Heartland and the provinces when dealing with the nature of Turkish rule.

The first serious Islamic incursion into India was the Arab invasion of Sind early in the eighth century. There had been sea contact between the two lands but these had been mainly commercial; the Arab attempt was an attack, an effort to gain dominance over a new land.

The effort succeeded. Sind became a part of the far flung Arab empire, which only four years before had added Spain as its western-most adjunct. But unlike Spain, where Arab rule came to stay, the conquest of Sind remained "a mere episode in the history of India". It failed to penetrate beyond a mere fringe of the Indian sub-continent and even there faded out with its Arab character totally blurred.

Several factors contributed to this decline. Arab power centred first in Damascus and then in Baghdad treated Sind more as an outpost than as a province. The Arab ruling class had therefore, perforce to adapt more and more to their conquest until the Indian-isation was so complete that the distinction of faith alone remained. From an outpost of the Khilafat, the Arab governorship became a local Indian dynasty. It continued to be so till destroyed by the iconoclastic Mahmud of Ghazna.

The tangible effect of Arab conquest was the establishment of an Arab centre in north-west India, which, ironically enough, served as a refuge zone for the heretics persecuted in other lands. It was to this asylum that the Isma'ilis came after the destruction of their nucleus. 'Ala-u'd-din found enough heresy in Multan to undertake a purification campaign.

The Arabs did not, in fact, leave a legacy for their successors. So little had the Turks in common with the Arabs that they crushed what little had remained of Arab influence, when they came into power.

The next invader has been more celebrated: but his contribution was even of less significance, unless like a Muslim Vasco da Gama, he may be said to have opened the gates of India by exposing the extreme vulnerability of Rajput states to foreign invasion. The permanent result of his repeated invasions was the loss of trans-Sutlej region and its constitution into a part of the Ghazni empire, a province where the last of the Ghaznavide came to rest.

Yet the role of Mahmud of Ghazna in the conquest of northern India by Muslims, was significant. He was the first Muslim invader to carry the banner of Islam victoriously across the length and breadth of this great land, and to dazzle followers and enemies alike by the magnificent vandalism of his iconoclastic zeal. His sack of Somnath was a gauntlet thrown to the entire Rajput world, a challenge which significantly for later generations, went unanswered. The value of his heroic exploits to the standard bearers of his culture and religion in later ages, was thus immense. He could be quoted and his name conjured whenever an additional or unusual effort was felt to be necessary.

For, the real value of Mahmud and his invasions lay not in the political consequences it had, but in its heritage of the heroic. This brilliance has eclipsed the more enduring though less spectacular achievements of Muhammad of Ghor and held up Mahmud of Ghazna as the founder of Muslim rule in India. Myth has always played a great part in history and Mahmud created a legend on a large scale; not territorial conquest but the reputation which adhered to him by virtue of his dazzling but ephemeral victories made Mahmud important. It was not what he was but what he became which made Mahmud of Ghazna great.

The invader who effected the real disruption of Rajput defence was Muhammad of Ghor. By his persistent efforts, he wore down the resistance of the Rajputs and by stationing his lieutenants in the conquered lands, he consolidated his success. By this process, a nucleus of Muslim power came into existence within India, a nucleus which in time became independent of its apparentation links to become the Sultanate of Delhi.

Obviously, Muhammad of Ghor needed a large number of followers on whom he could rely for this task. In other words, what he required was an institution, a body of people organised for a common purpose. The clue to the success of the relatively common-

place Muhammad of Ghor lies in the fact that he succeeded in creating this institution, in providing it with an internal coherence and common purpose. The so-called Slave Order, in reality a fraternity of Turks trained by Muhammad and appointed by him to high offices, was the institution which was responsible for ushering in the Indo-Islamic age in Indian history.

Like the Osmanalis in Europe, the Turks faced the necessity of assuring control over large agrarian population by a predominantly nomad ruling class. The Rajputs had not only to be beaten in the field but also to be forcibly held down afterwards: and the imposition of a continued, vigilant and foreign control over a large and not unwarlike population was the basic condition of their rule in India.

A high degree of military ability and constant preparedness coupled with an ever-present readiness to expand were thus the qualities required in the rulers. Equally important was the provision of the maximum degree of independence consistent with a centralising agency co-relating discrete efforts. Equality of status and promotion by talent, inherent in a "slave" order, assured the first; consciousness of common endeavour and the racial exclusiveness of the order provided the second. The aristocracy fostered by Muhammad of Ghor was thus eminently suited to undertake the reduction of the country and its subjugation to Turkish rule.

Internal cohesion in this ruling order was provided by race and religion. The challenge to cohesion was furnished by the conflicting ambitions of its members.

Race formed the first distinctive feature of this order for it was limited and very jealously limited to the Turks alone. None but a Turk could be the beneficiary under the system introduced by the Albari Turks, so much so that the Afghans had to wait long—upto the age of 'Ala-u'd-din—before being admitted as junior partners. The Sultanate of Hindustan was the birthright of the Turks alone.

Religion was second only to the race: overt, often ostentatious adherence to the accepted form of Sunnism was an absolute condition. Such conformity was required because the sanction—moral and religious—for this political set-up was its readiness to act as champions of faith on all occasions. It was due to this necessity of securing sanctions for their acts that the early Turkish Sultans

became dependent on the *ulema* and had to cultivate them assiduously: for in such sanction lay the justification for the socio-political supremacy of the Turks.

The success of the experiment was demonstrated by the rapid conquest of northern plains during the reigns of Qut-bu'd-din Aibak and Iltutmish. As a conquering machine, the Turkish order was unbeatable in the India of the thirteenth century; it could function with ruthless efficiency in relation to all who did not belong to its *we* category.

The northern plains were thus cleared of Rajput rulers. The Albari Turks performed a pioneering task in this venture and laid the foundations of a long-drawn out conflict. In their rapid expansion, however, the Turks had time to displace only the top strata of this ruling hierarchy; they could not and did not disturb the functioning of the system at lower levels except that they placed it under duress and exacted the maximum levy from it. The lower beneficiaries thus changed masters, without losing their traditional loyalty to the expelled ones, which could disappear only with lapse of time. With no love lost towards their conquerors, the *rais*, *rajas*, *thakurs* and such other smaller incumbents of the earlier system paid their tributes and bided their time. With no illusions regarding their tributaries, the Turks tolerated them so long as they behaved. On neither side was this taken as anything more than a truce, other than provisional.

It is difficult to find in the culture-system of the early Turks anything which would have inclined them to take a genial view of their Hindu subjects. Its guides in such matters, the *ulema*, spoke uniformly of *jehad* interpreted literally as a relentless war of attrition against the infidel; a writer as late as Amir Khusrau, who by temperament was a liberal, could be relied on to relapse into customary bigotry when this subject came up. It was a matter of regret, not jubilation, for the Turkish rulers that they could not convert a *dar-u'l harb* into a *dar-u'l Islam*.

Social and political necessity, therefore, while it compelled the Turks to recognise the existence of the Hindu as a necessary evil, did not permit them to allow him facilities which were any but imperative. While their power system could not be geared to the impossible messianic mission expected of it, it could scarcely afford to jettison its ambition of ultimately achieving it. Caught between the two extremes—cultural imperatives and political neces-

sities—the Turkish rulers tried various experiments, the *jiziyah* being one of them; but they never succeeded in orienting their vision to the objective situation, till the days of 'Ala-u'd-din.

Relentless war against the enemy and constant expansion linked with a scarcely tolerant attitude towards the Hindu subjects—such were the keynotes of early Turkish rule while it functioned healthily. Similar considerations fashioned its attitudes towards other non-Muslim elements. The Mongols were an enemy constantly knocking at the doors of the Sultans and were dealt with on the battlefields. The situation however was more complicated when non-Turkish co-religionists had to be dealt with.

Such were the non-Turkish foreigners and the Indian converts accepting the faith of the rulers. More distinct were the Muslims who followed different creeds, condemned by the *ulema* of the ruling oligarchy.

No non-Turkish elements appear to have infiltrated into the higher strata of Turkish oligarchy: here the exclusiveness of race debarred all but the favoured. On lower echelons, however, mostly administrative, non-Turkish foreigners were admitted and taken into confidence. Arabs and Persians were thus inducted on what may be called executive levels, for of affairs at this level the soldier Turks grasped little.

The *ulema* too appear to have been mostly non-Turkish. It could happen, and sometimes it did, that power passed in the hands of these bureaucratic functionaries, for example the *wazir*. Such cases were however very few; and once perceived, the *wazir* usually paid the price of high ambition.

The race-conscious Turks could not but look upon the converts recruited from the lowest strata of Hindu society with contempt and disdain. Appeals and adjurations against treating the base-born with anything but what he deserves fill the pages not only of Minhaj-u's-Siraj but also Barni, Amir Khusrau and even Isami. The lesser attendants of the multitudinous Friday prayers are mentioned contemptuously by Minhaj: and the advice given by Khusrau to kings in *Matla-u'l-Anwar* was not something unusual in his time. Raihan, the sole exception, was doubly condemned—as a convert and as an eunuch. The entire Turkish aristocracy united in opposing the only act of independence which the rosary-counting Sultan permitted himself.

The urban Muslim population of cities like Delhi, which was

considerable by the time of Balban does not appear to have been a factor in the political considerations of that age. The Turkish power inadvertently ushered in an age of social change; but the comprehension of such change was beyond their ken and certainly the Turks did not depend for their rule on the city rabbles. It is quite possible that these converts were in a relatively better position than their fellow Hindus. They did not have to pay the *jiziyah* and charitable institutions were open for their use. But this was the nearest they approached to the centre of power represented by the Turkish aristocracy.

The parallel of Indian Christians is an example of how far religious affinity can lead in power-sharing. Missionary activity fostered and supported by the British resulted in large pockets of Christian population recruited from the have-not elements of Hindu society. But in either case, conversion failed to improve the condition of the converted in any except the superficial way. Despite all their protests to the contrary, the rulers looked to birth and wealth and not religion when they were compelled to find allies for their rule.

In relation to the non-conforming Muslim sects as well, the Turks were anything but tolerant. The ruthlessness with which the *Karamati* and the *Mulahidah* uprisings were put down in Delhi—and the opprobrium which is loaded on all those who were presumed to be the compounders of Islam with heresy, in other words, whose interpretation of Islam differed from orthodox Sunnism, indicates that the persecution extended to the *kafir* was equally available to the heretic.

The internal cohesion within the Turkish aristocracy also underwent stress during its tenure. The degree to which any social order can achieve unity depends on the extent to which individual freedom of action is subordinate to the demands of the collectivity; in other words, to the degree an individual is able to submerge himself in the whole. The unity is threatened when the individual becomes restless under the restraints imposed and feels that either he is being dealt with unfairly or that the shared system of goals and objectives is no longer worth the sacrifice involved.

The Turkish hierarchy had achieved coherence by stressing race and religion and developing a judicious system of recognition and rewards. It had also provided a system of shared goals and a common organisation. But the achievement fell far short of the

required one; the balance which is essential for a closely knitted social order could never be struck.

An undercurrent of mutual rivalry, tension and at times open strife marked the relations between the members of this socio-political order. Semi-regal sway in distant Indian outposts, with little or no curb on them, made the Turkish nobles impatient of *any* control. Promotions inevitably engendered strifes and fanned rivalry. In a system where a number of equals or near equals were bunched together, insistence on protocol and considerations of prestige could become fruitful sources of quarrels so that the smallest incident could be magnified into a major insult. Internal unity was difficult to arrive at except in external war.

Thus the only factors cementing this political system became: first, a vigilant guard against anyone of them becoming too powerful, i.e. maintenance of an internal balance of power; second, either a threat to their preserve or a fruitful ground for expansion. The expansionist zeal diminished steadily as internal tensions mounted and as power-politics in the post-Iltutmish period engrossed the attention of the Albari Turks.

The mutual squabbles thus could be held in check only by a strong leader, with the personality to command obedience. The Sultan had been the creator and the operator of this machine, and if the hand at the lever was weak, it could run to self-destruction. Both Aibak and after him Iltutmish were recruited as slaves and attaining their position as the favourites of their masters represented the system at its prime—a strong and acknowledged leadership at the helm of affairs.

After Iltutmish, a decline set in. No Sultan had the personality to command the *Chehelgan* who constituted themselves into a board of kingmakers. Inside the *Chehelgan* itself, a war of all against all, commenced, an effort to maintain balance which smashed the balance itself. No Aibak or an Iltutmish could come from this stultified aristocracy. For, to select, it is necessary to rule. Iltutmish's successors became pawns in these brawls. Raziyah tried to stem the rot but being a woman, could not. Factions of the nobles raised puppets to the throne, only to discover that even puppets were chary of relying on fickle support and the whole game began once over again.

In this age of confusion, the Turkish aristocracy was reduced considerably. Its personnel also underwent a change. Aibak and

his lieutenants had been the followers of Muhammad of Ghor while Aibak had reared Iltutmish and his aristocracy. Iltutmish was the last to leave a legacy of highly placed Turkish slaves, but after him the flow ceased. Not only had the successors of Iltutmish become incompetent but the Mongols had effectively cut off the areas which were the breeding ground of these nobles.

The internecine wars took their toll and by the time Balban began to consolidate his influence in the reign of his son-in-law, the *Chehelgan*, the rump of the once powerful elite, had become a group of old and tired men, no longer energetic enough to resist the machinations of the strong man. Not only Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud but the Turkish aristocracy also abdicated power to Balban for the simple reason that it had become atrophied due to lack of fresh blood.

In its lifetime of about two generations, the Turkish aristocracy laid the foundations of Muslim rule in India. It fulfilled thus a historic role. It however failed to perceive—an oligarchy is by nature blind to this reality—that it needed its leader almost as much as its leader needed it. Without a focus of organisation, it became confused, aimless, bewildered and self-destructive. A Sultan who was a puppet in the hands of its factions was worse than useless—for fierce and destructive civil war was the result. The only answer to the situation was the recreation of strong leadership; and its precondition was the destruction of the oligarchy.

The rise of Balban to supreme power was not the reward of supreme unscrupulousness alone. It was also demanded by the circumstances and determined by its antecedents.

By the time the reign of the self-effacing Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud neared its end, the first flush of Turkish expansion was past; and so was the historic necessity for the Turkish oligarchy. In fact, the system had outlived itself by nearly twenty years, years that were full of danger to the nascent nucleus of Muslim authority in India.

The immediate need before the rulers, at this stage, was consolidation, not conquest, defence not expansion. Consolidation and defence both required regimentation and strong centralised authority. The Sultanate could not continue to be a loose confederation of squabbling nobles; it had to knit on a new foundation which would underline unity and central control.

This necessity was further augmented by the shadow of the Mongols on the north-west frontier. Defence inevitably focalised power and Balban being indisputably the ablest general of his day undertook both the defence of the Sultanate and its concomitant duties with their attached powers.

In establishing his personal authority, Balban was moving away from the tribal concept of the Turks towards the absolutist ideal demanded by the Indian environment. It was a step, though by no means a complete one, in ridding the Sultanate of the idea of the government of the Turks, by the Turks and for the Turks. By reaffirming the independence of the Sultan from any such hierarchy, Balban was at once repudiating his immediate antecedents and widening the base of his support.

A fresh chapter in the evolution of the Sultanate opens with the accession of Balban. The loosely knit Sultanate is cemented into a strong, centralised *kriegstaat*, able not only to withstand Mongol attacks but also serve as the springboard for future expansion. Balban thus set the stage for 'Ala-u'd-din.

Balban had thus a twofold task: he had not only to reorganise the Sultanate on a different basis administratively but also to raise the prestige of the Sultan above and beyond the plaything it had become. In fact, both of these were the two facets of a single whole, i.e., the exaltation of the Sultan above party levels and the implementation of his will in supersession of any other authority. The first pre-condition to this end was the assertion of the Sultan as the only ruler in the Sultanate, and consequently, the relegation of the nobles to the status of subordinate functionaries.

The assertion of the Sultan's authority implied a number of innovations. Permanence and stability for the institution of the Sultanate and prestige and reverence for its incumbent was an immediate requisite. This meant not only the destruction of the old concept of the Sultan's position but a fresh evaluation and an entire recreation of his position. The oligarchy was to cease to be a frame of reference for the Sultan. He had to act in relation to a wider audience, to attract to himself the loyalty of people other than the Turks. Only thus he could rise from a Turkish chief to be an Indian ruler.

Half of Balban's task was completed when he secured a facile passage to the throne by virtually liquidating the *Chehelgan*;

the remnants who lived on in his reign were quickly undeceived as to the nature of the new regime and removed immediately after on one pretext or the other. Simultaneously, Balban deliberately launched a policy of investing the Sultanate with a new aura, invoked by ritualistic ceremonies and grave decorous behaviour, serious and unalloyed with light pleasantries. The reserve and aloofness studiously cultivated by the Sultan, the ever-present group of grave *ulema*, ruthless punishments and unrelenting justice—all these were designed not only to lift the kingship from the morass into which it had fallen but also to invest it with a halo which was characteristically Indian.

The studious association with the *ulema* also gave Balban something of a moral sanction, emanating from strict and punctilious discharge of onerous religious duties. He thus attracted to himself the allegiance of not only the Turks but of the wider Muslim society which was coming into existence—the Indian converts, foreigners like the Afghans and other urban Muslim elements. Despite his oft-spoken contempt for the base-born, Balban attempted and can be said to have partly succeeded in claiming, if not the allegiance, at least the passive support of large sections of the Muslim populace.

Balban differed significantly in this respect from his predecessors, for they had never looked beyond their limited collective interests. Yet though he gave a place to the Afghans in the ruling hierarchy, he did not allow the Indian Muslims to be anything more than camp followers. He directed his attention to influential elements, *ulema* and the aristocracies other than the Turks, with whose support he could buttress his position, rather than look to the humbler sections of society, who were politically negligible. Balban secured the support of lower Muslim classes, but his consideration stopped short of awarding them any significant position in the political set-up, for which after all, they were not equipped.

Balban also understood clearly that the time had not yet come when he could secure the support of non-Muslim aristocracy. Neither had the Rajputs been reconciled to the foreign power nor was the expropriation undertaken by the Turks showing any signs of permanent abatement. Any compromise between these irreconcilable enemies was thus out of question.

Moreover, if Barni can be said to report him correctly, Balban is said to have stressed the religious mission of the Sultanate as an instrument in eradicating *kufr*. It does not seem unlikely; Balban

was surrounded by the *ulema* and was trying to win the good-will of the influential Muslim classes whose religious affections were more vocal than real and who avowed religious antagonism almost as a matter of form. Therefore, if Balban expressed his opinions in the approved way, though there is no reason to believe that his personal opinions were otherwise, he was only being a man of his age.

Balban therefore vigorously reasserted the expansionist policy of the early Sultans, though only at a later date when he had consolidated his position, had built up a centralized administration and had provided enough security against the Mongols. Also, he kept carefully within limits and avoided any untenable positions. By and far he contented himself with modest acquisitions and left the real work to be done by his successors.

Balban's contribution, to sum up, was the reorganisation of the Sultanate on a new postulate—the absolutist. His success was relative; he broke the stifling restraints imposed by the outdated Turkish aristocracy and exalted the status of the Sultan much above that of Iltutmish or any other early Turkish Sultan. But his dependence on the *ulema* limited his outlook and made it impossible for him to view himself in a larger frame of reference. In a way, this was inevitable; for Balban was only a pioneer in a task which found its consummation in 'Ala-u'd-din and its apotheosis in Muhammad bin Tughuluq.

Nevertheless, Balban broadened the base of the Sultanate to include those Muslim elements, aristocratic no doubt, who had been excluded by the closed oligarchy of the Turks. This widening was in turn, made possible by awarding greater powers to the Sultan. For, as in Europe, absolute authority could be constructed only on the ruins of diffused centres of power. Balban destroyed a nobility; what he attempted to create was a bureaucracy.

After Iltutmish, Balban was the first Sultan to take in hand the reconstitution and recruitment of the nobility. His ideal was to create a machine, pliable to his will; but objective conditions made delegation of great authority imperative and the execution of king's orders in distant provinces, extremely limited. Thus with a changed personnel, the nobility continued in exercise of its functions though Balban clipped its independence as far as he could. New elements, other than the Albari Turks, were inducted into the

system—for instance the Khaljis—and personal loyalty to the Sultan replaced the older concept of tribal allegiance.

With these changes, the nobility necessarily lost the cohesion, the sense of unity, which despite all internal bickerings, had characterised the racially-knit Albari Turks. It lost the sense of common trust with which the Sultanate had been viewed by the earlier aristocracy—its feeling that the Sultanate was its own thing. It became incapable of exercising a restraint over a weak Sultan, or of offering counsel to a strong one, as Iltutmish had been helped by his lieutenants. It lost in stature: its members could be officials but not policy-makers.

Moreover, Balban's policy succeeded in freeing the Sultan to some extent from the confines of the nobility and investing him with near absolute authority. Independence inevitably implied isolation—it required a giant not a pigmy at the helm. If the Sultan was superior and beyond the nobles, if the Sultanate was not a tribal preserve, then the Sultan had either to live up to his duties or pass away. Kingship had become vulnerable to the test of merit.

The reign of Kaiqubad demonstrates the failure of this second-rate aristocracy in a situation for which it was not fitted. Kaiqubad was patently incapable of stepping into the place of his grandfather and of using the powerful instrument forged by him. The tradition and the awe of his grandfather sheltered him in his early debauched years, while authority slipped into the hands of his minister Nizam-u'd-din, plotting to secure the overthrow of this worthless ruler. Unfortunately for Kaiqubad, he realised his lieutenant's ambitions and listened to his father's advice; the dismissal of Nizam-u'd-din opened the flood-gates of chaos which he was not equipped to weather.

Nizam-u'd-din's designs, it must also be remembered, were unscrupulous no doubt, but so had been Balban's. However debased his methods and morals may have been, he was following the path chalked out by Balban himself, for if ability alone was to be test of kingship, then with the Khaljis out of the way, he had a game chance of carrying his *coup* off. At least, he could not be questioned on legal or moral grounds. Balban had not dared to lay his hands openly on the person of the grandson of Iltutmish; but that tradition had been scotched and no such sanctity was attached to the dissolute and worthless grandson of Balban.

Yet Nizam-u'd-din's calculations were not wholly correct for

the situation was not as logical as he saw it. Betrayal inevitably carried a stigma with it, so much so that even the great Balban had not escaped it. Besides, the Turks, however decadent, were not likely to acquiesce easily in a blatant usurpation of what had long been acknowledged as their preserve. Despite Balban's induction of other elements, they felt themselves to be the senior partners in the enterprise of ruling. The fact that Firuz Khalji could never wholly overcome his guilt-complex in doing away with the Albari Turks, also demonstrates that this feeling was not limited to them alone.

It was ultimately a tribal dual which signalled the end of seventy-year Albari rule and heralded the era of the Khaljis. The Khaljis had been gaining ground since Balban patronised them, possibly to provide a counter-poise to the older aristocracy. In the confused *melee* which followed the incapacitation of Kaiqubad, the balance did not turn in the favour of the Khaljis till a strong section of the Albari Turks went over to them and the two Aitmars, the last of the veterans, had been killed.

The capital too appears to have entertained strong legitimist sentiments. It may possibly be too much to say that a popular insurrection broke out against Khalji usurpation, but surely, there was resentment in certain sections of Delhi populace against this change of dynasties. What sections actually were affected is difficult to decide; but the resentment was neither effective nor organised. It appears to have been vague and inchoate, a feeling rather than a movement. It was not with much difficulty that the Kotwal, who had his sons at stake, managed to soothe the multitude and pursuaded it to disperse. The cause of the Sultan was still too distant for the poor man to stake his all.

Chapter II

KHALJI ABSOLUTISM

'Ala-u'd-din's coup—*Changes in the ruling class during the century-old rule in India—'Ala-u'd-din's policies: success, causes of—Alai Expansion: Its nature—Malik Kafur—Mubarak Shah and the Barwaris*

'ALA-U'D-DIN'S reign marks the high water-mark of successful despotism in the history of the Sultanate. Not only is the policy of Balban resumed and taken forward but a serious attempt is made to permeate the *doab* lands, the "heartland" of the Sultanate, with the authority of the Sultan. Not only does the revitalised Sultanate embark on triumphant expansionism with disastrous results for Rajput states, not only is the banner of Islam carried across the Vindhyas and even across the Krishna, but in the capital itself, opposition to the Sultan is cowed down by sheer force. At home and abroad, the Sultan vindicates his right to rule.

In the brief reign of the gentle Firuz Khalji, his associates had tried to compel the aged Sultan to allow them to garner the fruits of their accession to power, but with little success. The aged Sultan was good to the point of feebleness and while his impatient lieutenants bided their time, hoping to find in Arkali Khan, a leader closer to their bent, 'Ala-u'd-din faced them with a situation which they were hardly prepared for. By a *coup*, unparalleled in its brutality and unscrupulousness, Firuz Khalji's son-in-law and nephew, heralded his accession to the throne.

'Ala-u'd-din's *coup* had significant implications. It was in violation of all accepted ethical codes, a crass repudiation of the moral code of the age. It was a blow against his own people, the Khaljis, a conspiracy in which 'Ala-u'd-din could hope to rely only on his immediate associates. It was thus a move against the entire socio-political order of the day, and thus when 'Ala-u'd-din's gamble came off, he had won despite the opposition of all except his followers. 'Ala-u'd-din's absolutism thus sprang from the nature of his accession—the personal triumph of an unscrupulous man, repudiating all and every accepted notion, if not expressly, surely by implication. Power thus came to him—or was rather seized by him—without any strings attached.

Moreover, 'Ala-u'd-din, as his foul action showed, was free from any real moral convictions; in other words, he was uninhibited by any internalised culture patterns and thus advantageously placed to view and solve the issues pragmatically. His only touchstone could be the good of himself first, of his Sultanate in the second place. And he did not have to cultivate the *ulema* or win their good-will. This freedom was the charter of the personal absolutism he was able to establish. He could deal with the Rajputs without prejudice; he could punish the nobles without qualms. The pragmatism he confessed to Qazi Mughith-u'd-din was not without foundation: it had its roots in the personality of 'Ala-u'd-din and in his unorthodox way to the throne.

Thus 'Ala-u'd-din was enabled to build on the traditions of Balban. Not only did he do away with political rivals but he attempted to set at naught accepted and revered social ideals. His dream of assuming Prophethood can be dismissed lightly, but it indicated an overweening ego refusing to bind itself by any restrictions, least of all moral and religious. 'Ala-u'd-din shared the dream of all despots that he and he alone should hold the stage, be the centre of light, glory and authority and to him alone the peans of praise should rise. Success not only against odds but against the accepted values of his age alone could have induced these fantastic dreams in the despot's mind.

In a vague and hesitant way therefore, 'Ala-u'd-din's attempt at personal rule was a struggle not only against the social and cultural shackles which inhibited the Sultan from doing justice to his task, but it was also a movement away from the narrow concept in which the Sultanate had been confined till then. So long as power remained with a racial oligarchy with non-political objectives, success in administering India was hard to come by. 'Ala-u'd-din had seen this vast country and understood a few of the conditions of ruling it; those who surrounded him, specially the older people, had none of this understanding. 'Ala-u'd-din's attempt was therefore an effort to mould the tool to the object—to orient the Sultanate to the objective condition with which it had to deal.

Unlike his successor Muhammad bin Tughuluq, 'Ala-u'd-din managed in making his despotism successful. Despite all his excesses, his vices and his foibles, 'Ala-u'd-din left the Sultanate incomparably enlarged and strengthened than when he found it. He understood the changes which had come about, and he had the

keen and unerring insight which is the hall-mark of all outstanding rulers.

Hundred years earlier, when the Turks poured into northern India, the country they faced had been utterly alien and hostile. They consequently formed into a fighting aristocracy which expanded itself by conquest. A major portion of the Indian plains passed under their control by the time the first flush of victory ceased. A temporary recession ensued under the successors of Iltutmish; and Balban was content to reorganise and consolidate rather than undertake unwieldy conquests.

During this century, far-reaching changes took place in the ruling society. Internal lines of divisions blurred as waves after waves of Muslim immigrants passed into India and an amalgam began to take shape. The racial oligarchy of Iltutmish yielded place to the less race-conscious nobility of Balban which was more responsive to considerations of personal ambition than to fast receding racial goals. With the exaltation of the Khaljis to supreme power, racialism itself came to occupy a secondary place.

The Sultan's position changed correspondingly. From a tribal chief, he became a political sovereign to whom considerations of race—even of religion so far as 'Ala-u'd-din was concerned—were of secondary importance in relation to the weal of his Empire. His outlook became narrower, for he lost the feeling of acting for a social system, lost the intimacy which marks a small exclusive circle, with its inhibitive moral taboos. It also became broader, horizons non-existent to his predecessors opening out for him. He could look to a larger class of persons and act in reference to a different necessity: he could disregard earlier considerations and pursue independent lines of action.

This had drawbacks: for, freed from the earlier moral considerations, the Sultan became irresponsible and free from any conditions which had limited his sphere of action. Statecraft replaced morality, with all its concomitants and the Sultan while he became free also lost valuable support. Authority in the shape of the Sultan could be termed—in 'Ala-u'd-din's case justifiably so—as the uncamouflaged assertion of force buttressed by unscrupulous wiles and expressed in terror. If success, however, achieved, was the solvent of all sins, then the future attempts of Malik Kafur and Khusrau were in-written in the political adventures of 'Ala-u'd-din.

The Sultan, no doubt thus became better equipped to deal with his problems; but this freedom also gave rise to systematic ruthlessness, characteristic of the reign of 'Ala-u'd-din. Punishment of women and children for crimes committed by their menfolk, which as Barni avers was an innovation of the *Alai* age, mass murders of neo-Muslims and numerous other excesses in implementing the price-control system, were the results of this pragmatic philosophy which exalted political interests above everything else. The only answer to the monolithic structure of the Sultanate became the organisation of a rival power-cluster able to meet and break this power-cluster and then usurp its place. Political pragmatism, uninhibited by moral or humanistic considerations, thus led to relentless race for power, in other words, to a relapse to anarchy as in the days after 'Ala-u'd-din.

Absolutism had also several other consequences. The old nobility was degraded and its place was taken by new incumbents owing their position to the favour of the Sultan. These people, a motley lot which ranged from a eunuch to the venerable Ghazi Malik, were the instruments which translated 'Ala-u'd-din's will into action, while the older nobles were denied the freedom even to marry or drink. A number of new generals arose—Alp Khan, Ulugh Khan, Nusrat Khan, Ain-u'l-mulk Multani, Ghazi Malik, Malik Kafur, to recount only a few—loyal to the Sultan and trusted by him to the extent of independence.

Bureaucracy under the direct control of the Sultan also gained in power. It reached a pitch of efficiency never known before: the excellent spy system and the successful implementation of the price-control in the capital and its environs were the measure of its success. Far more significant was its extension in the *doab* lands, where it established direct contact with the agrarian classes to the detriment of not only the Hindu middleman but the Muslim noble. It was by virtue of the excellence of his bureaucratic system that 'Ala-u'd-din was able to transgress limits, vertical and horizontal, which his predecessors had found insuperable.

The other people to suffer from the increasing authority of the Sultan, were thus the prosperous agrarian middlemen in the *doab* and the Rajput rulers outside the Sultanate. Both of them were expropriated and their privileges usurped by the Sultan and his officials.

The military aristocracy formed by 'Ala-u'd-din, an aristocracy of talent distinct from that of birth, was the real gainer under this system and remained his staunch supporter till the end. On the military was lavished the first care of the Sultan, so much so that prices were depressed to meet its inflated number in the capital. Its leaders were among the most important associates of 'Ala-u'd-din and they formed the core on which he depended. The Sultan rewarded them by opening to them the doors of fabulous wealth and power, so long as he did not have occasion to mistrust them.

The less influential though more numerous of his supporters belonged to the large Muslim urban population which had by this time developed in cities like Delhi. 'Ala-u'd-din's appeal to them was at once romantic and material. On the day he entered Delhi, he won them over by scattering his southern wealth with open hands and then kept them fascinated by a constant series of brilliant victories and a cascade of riches which poured in from the south and the west. They thronged into his armies and conquered distant areas for him and circulated legends regarding his marvellous exploits. Their less fortunate brethren, who remained in the capital, had the price-control system to rejoice over. The unprecedented prosperity of the capital under him, full employment, price-control and the availability of lots of easy money—all these were factors calculated to endear 'Ala-u'd-din to the common man. Even prohibition, lightly administered in cases other than those of the nobles, could be forgiven to the Sultan who had provided not only plenty of food to the plebeian but also fired his imagination.

For, on top of all his achievements was the personality of the Sultan, not an attractive but surely a compelling one. The ideal of the "Strong Man" so dear to the unsophisticated, found actual expression in 'Ala-u'd-din. His unquestioned bravery and generalship, the barbarian splendour of his court and his crude ostentation, his vulgar appetites and his coarse passions—all were calculated to endear him to an unsophisticated and pageant-loving audience. Throughout his life 'Ala-u'd-din held the imagination of the people of Delhi and much of his success was due not to his virtues but to his foibles.

'Ala-u'd-din, it may be noted, in his appeal to the under-privileged classes did not draw the distinction of faith. No such discrimination is suggested by any of his measures and excepting the *jiziyah*, the Hindu subjects of 'Ala-u'd-din directly under his control do not

appear to have suffered from any disability. Surely, the extravagant advice of Qazi Mughith-u'd-din, strongly against the entire politic policies of 'Ala-u'd-din, was never translated into practice. It may have been that the Muslim subjects felt greater affinity with him and his rule, but the non-Muslim humbler classes had nothing to complain against in his stern, egalitarian rule.

Simultaneously with the reorganisation of the Sultanate, 'Ala-u'd-din followed a highly successful policy of expansion, which for the first time brought the Muslim arms in contact with the south and west. He inaugurated, as Wolseley Haig wrote, the "imperial phase" in the history of the Sultanate.

Unlike the *doab* areas which were bound strongly to the central exchequer, 'Ala-u'd-din on the whole adopted a lenient attitude towards these new conquests, not demanding that they be linked mandatorily to the central organisation. Rather, he preferred to place them in charge of trusted lieutenants and leave them autonomous subject to the routine necessities of paying tribute and acknowledging his title. One of his most far-seeing and statesman-like measure which provided the Sultanate with a great deal of stability was this recognition of the balance between central control and provincial autonomy.

The Sultanate under 'Ala-u'd-din therefore included diverse administrations. In the Deccan, his authority was acknowledged and Ramdeo of Deogir remitted regular tributes to Delhi; but beyond the acknowledgement of overlordship and the payment of tribute, and also rendering aid to Malik Kafur during his campaigns, no checks limited the autonomy of Ramdeo. Beyond Deogir were areas which did not acknowledge 'Ala-u'd-din, and which therefore could be attacked or ravaged at will, unless they saved themselves by paying ransom, as Raja Pratap Rudra Dev of Telangana did. The Deccan was a veritable goldmine to 'Ala-u'd-din, but beyond extracting gold from it, 'Ala-u'd-din left it alone in the possession of its kings and in the enjoyment of its institutions.

More thorough was the conquest of Gujarat, for here the ruling dynasty was quashed and the conquered kingdom incorporated in the Sultanate. Delhi thus established the same relation with Anhilwara Patan as Ghazna had established with Delhi a century earlier. But even in this case, no checks were placed on Alp Khan's

administration of the province, subject to routine regulations. So long as he enjoyed the confidence of the Sultan, Alp Khan was supreme in Gujarat.

In other areas too, the Sultan delegated wide authority to trusted lieutenants. Ghazi Malik, in charge of the vital frontier zone of Multan, was virtually autonomous. In other provinces too, undue interference from the centre was not a feature of 'Ala-u'd-din's policy.

Most of 'Ala-u'd-din's other ventures were mainly directed at securing his communication lines against the Rajputs and safeguarding his empire against the repeated inroads of the Mongols. The attack on Ranthambhor and Chittor and his invasions of Sewana and Jalor were mainly for this purpose.

For defence, the most vital area of the Sultanate was the Heartland—the Ganga-Yamuna *doab* and its adjoining areas, the most rigidly controlled part of the Sultanate. The north-west, left in charge of Ghazi Malik was not so vital, and the largest military build-up was centred in Delhi and it was maintained in constant readiness to meet the slightest threat. Siri was the last outpost which could be abandoned to the enemy without extinction.

The *doab* was vital because it was the source of the Sultan's strength, the prime supplier of his finances, the nerve-centre from where his authority radiated. Besides, its psychological importance was great, the Sultan of Hindustan being the ruler of India. This vital core therefore could hardly be released without inviting certain death.

The success of 'Ala-u'd-din's rule, mystifying to the orthodox Barni, lay in the recognition of the possible and the impossible, revealed to him due to his uncanny political insight. His empire was like a huge octopus with a strong and vital central body-structure, extending its tentacles far and wide in search of prey. He recognised the different requirements of the body and its acquisitions and maintained a judicious balance between centralised control and regional autonomy demanded by the necessities of transport and communication. This recognition coupled with a set of trusted men placed in charge of these areas secured the adhesion of distant provinces, while the strict administration of the *doab* kept his own strength alive and vital.

His abiding contribution was the conquest of Gujarat. In Deccan, he and his generals blazed a trail which they left for later genera-

tions to follow. Bengal was not troubled. 'Ala-u'd-din contented himself with securing riches from the Deccan, bringing Gujarat in the fold and breaking the petty Rajas on the periphery of Rajasthan, keeping his life-lines open and safeguarding his empire against the Mongols. Thanks to his political perspicacity, he succeeded admirably in achieving his limited aims. Unlettered though he may have been, he easily stands out as the most successful and the most sagacious ruler of the Sultanate before Sher Shah.

It is difficult not to think of Malik Kafur in terms which are not unfavourable; the consensus of opinion through the centuries has consistently been against him. His rise as a *parvenu* by virtue of an allegedly unnatural favour, his sinister influence over an enfeebled Sultan wrecked by unrestrained violence and debauchery and above all his overweening ambition to rule—factors such as these have obscured his talent and highlighted what could be construed to have been the darker side of his character.

But talent Malik Kafur had, and that too in no small measure. It was he who carried Muslim arms to the farthest of South India, acting as the Mahmud Ghazna of South India. It appears rather naive to presume that 'Ala-u'd-din fascinated by his physical charms placed him in command of the army of the South. Catamites do not aspire to military commands, and even if they do, they do not fulfil them successfully. Malik Kafur vindicated his choice amply when he proved himself to be ablest general in an age when military talent was not scarce.

No proof exists to the effect that Malik Kafur was disloyal to 'Ala-u'd-din though he certainly poisoned his mind against his nearest kinsmen. But in this, he was evidently acting in self-defence, for none of the aristocratic Khaljis could have looked upon this "vile upstart" with anything but distaste. Only the favour of the ailing Sultan was his charter not only for high position but for life itself, and it is not to be wondered at that he worked to consolidate his position when this bulwark was no more. He fought against odds and like his opponents used unscrupulous methods, yet his methods were less crude, less cruel than those of 'Ala-u'd-din's successor Mubarak Shah. He only blinded Khizr Khan while Mubarak Shah not only killed his brother but seized his wife too.

In fact, what has been most against him is his plebeian origin and the fact of his being a eunuch; otherwise, Malik Kafur was not

more unscrupulous than most men of his age and dealt with his enemies in a more merciful way than they would have dealt with him, had they got the upper hand. But none of the historians have been able to forget that he was an outsider forcing his way against the "legitimate" claims of the aristocrats and royal family members. They have taken it for granted that he was the evil spirit behind 'Ala-u'd-din's disaffection towards his wife and children, without caring to verify whether there was any substance in 'Ala-u'd-din's complaint that he was being hemmed in by hostility emanating even from those who should have behaved otherwise.

Kafur and following him Khusrau, represent like Raihan earlier, the intrusion of alien elements into the preserve of aristocratic foreign Muslims. They indicate an effort on the part of the Sultan to make his institution representative of a broad sector of society—the effort of an absolute sovereign to transcend the limits imposed by immediate environment on his power. Such a move, unless it could be shown to have been inspired by levity, foreboded a grave danger for the aristocracy; and this is one of the main reasons why the historians of the ruling class have been so unforgiving and unfair to these three solitary figures.

In a way, the reign of Mubarak Shah is reminiscent of Kaiqubad. In both cases weak and worthless rulers succeeded unusually assertive and capable ones; in both cases, the consequence was the supplantation of one dynasty by the other. Both Sultans allowed themselves to be dominated by strong lieutenants who ultimately connived at their downfall.

The differences are however more significant. Mubarak Shah though young was no Kaiqubad. He had undergone the ordeal before coming to the throne. He was more cautious, abler and preferred to keep the reins in his own hands. Moreover, the nobility had less control over him than it had over Kaiqubad; the nobles in Delhi could do nothing except watch helplessly the rising influence of the Barwaris. The success of 'Ala-u'd-din is testified to by the power which automatically came to his far less able son. Only the lieutenants of 'Ala-u'd-din could come to the rescue of Delhi when the Barwaris had done their worst.

Thus though Mubarak Shah ended the stringent policies of his father, he did not abandon the expansionist tendencies initiated by him, a proof of his ability and strength. He kept his father's

appointment intact. Only in Gujarat, disturbed not by him but by his predecessor, did he appoint new men; but here he was influenced by his adviser Khusrau. To the South, he went himself and reasserted Khalji influence in that land which had thought that with the death of 'Ala-u'd-din, northern intrusion would end.

The short-lived ascendancy of the Barwaris presents an interesting interlude in the history of the Sultanate. Like Kafur, Khusrau had had the misfortune to have his history written by his enemies. Evidently, he was not a mere catamite—even Ibn Battutah has testified otherwise. Like Kafur, he won his spurs in the South, though his ability was distinctly of an inferior order than that of the eunuch. Like Kafur again, he incurred the implacable hostility of the aristocracy which saw in him and his associates a direct threat to their interests. No doubt, he was guilty of regicide, but this was not an unprecedented crime and it became necessary because Mubarak Shah was growing wary of the Barwari net.

Unlike Kafur, who during the lifetime of his master, remained steadfastly loyal to him, Khusrau connived at the murder of his patron and for a brief while became the Emperor of India. In his dreams to revive the glories of pre-Sultanate era, a trace of idealism which transcends personal ambition, can be discerned, and in this aim, he appears to have had considerable support, particularly of the humbler classes. By and far, his unpopularity was limited to the ruling circles.

Even in these circles, Khusrau succeeded in forming a group of supporters; in fact, his strength became such as to deter many an *Alai* noble from joining Ghazi Malik. The Tughuluq noble moreover found the Barwari a implacable foe and came within an ace of being beaten by him. In brief, Khusrau can hardly be dismissed as a contemptible figure. He was a much more significant figure than what Barni, Isami or even Amir Khusrau have made him out to be.

His attempt, like other minority attempts to break the vested interests of foreign Muslim aristocracy, failed because it had little *organised* support behind it—no strong and determined group able to match the armed strength of their rivals. Khusrau had to depend on his kinsmen alone with little support from other groups; and they were not sufficient to ensure him victory though they made success for his opponents extremely doubtful. He had little organised following in the region he had to rule and when foreign Muslim

nobles abandoned him, almost *en masse*, for Ghazi Malik, he discovered his perilous standing.

Moreover, Khusrau failed to see that he was more dependent on the Sultan than he had been on Khusrau; that once the *de jure* authority of his rule disappeared, he himself would not be able to weather the storm, that the control of Delhi did not give him the control of the Sultanate, and that in a moment of crisis he would stand alone. Without any ally, internal or external, a *coup* against powerful vested interests was likely to be short lived.

Chapter III

THE TUGHULUQS: THE APOTHEOSIS OF DESPOTISM

Ghazi Malik—Tughuluq Shah : his policy—Nizam-u'd-din Auliya : Delhi dur ast—*Muhammad bin Tughuluq : collapse—Firuz Shah Tughuluq : the last—The Sultanate of Delhi; a post-script*

THE TUGHULUQ dynasty marks, in the person of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq, the consummation of absolutism and bureaucracy to a point beyond sustenance—leading thus to decline and fall. It extends the principles enunciated by Balban and 'Ala-u'd-din to unworkable lengths, resulting ultimately in collapse. For this, the most brilliant Sultan in the history of the Sultanate was responsible. He failed to perceive that both principles and practices tend to be limited by time and space—mostly by space.

The career of Ghazi Malik is an instance of the rise of a soldier of fortune. Unlike Firuz Khalji, he was not the head of a tribe or clan, nor did he have any pretensions to high birth. He entered India as a soldier, advanced rapidly under the discerning eye of 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji and effected his rise by sheer ability. Barring 'Ala-u'd-din and possibly Kafur, he was easily the ablest general of his time. His successful sentinelship of the frontier against marauding Mongols, an acid test of military prowess, not only gave him a great reputation but also concentrated great power in his hands. Power thus came to him because of duties rendered : he became autonomous because there was no getting away from it, if the gates of India were to be safeguarded.

His recognition as Sultan was therefore an indirect refutation of the doctrine of birth, as also of the presumption that the throne was a preserve of the Turks alone. No doubt, the complete extinction of the Khalji line helped; the situation was not the same as when Malik Chhajju and others were bypassed to place the Khaljis on the seat of power. But then the Khaljis had represented a force: now, Ghazi Malik stood forth as a military captain not a tribal chief. What placed him in power was an aristocracy, though essentially foreign, yet one which was based not on birth but on promotion secured by talent and ability. It was the aristocracy built by 'Ala-u'd-din.

The Sultanate had indeed travelled a long way from Iltutmish to Ghazi Malik. In Ghazi Malik, crowned Tughuluq Shah, the Sultanate had had its first ruler whose charter to his place was ability.

Tughuluq Shah gave ample proof of his ability in handling the apparatus—administrative and political—which he had been called upon to handle. He understood his dependence on the broad Muslim masses and their religious guides, the *ulema*; in this he is reminiscent of Balban. He also realised the role played by nobility in state affairs and the limitations to which personal absolutism is subject. He struck therefore a successful balance between royal control and individual initiative—the key to the success of his brief tenure.

Thus he restored law and order, wiped out the traces of Barwari interlude and conciliated the aristocratic classes outraged by the disgraceful events of the last few days. Post-relays were established, roads built and the administrative system made to run smoothly on slow-forming grooves. Muhammad bin Tughuluq inherited an empire in which precedents were already being formed which would have given it a longer life, had he only abstained from his extremist measures.

In his southern policy, nontheless, Tughuluq Shah took the policy of 'Ala-u'd-din to a higher and therefore more risky length. 'Ala-u'd-din had not attempted to force his rule on southern potentates; but Juna Khan during his southern campaign was instructed to ask for "unconditional surrender", in reality, for incorporating the kingdoms of the Deccan in the Sultanate. This policy was at once logical in the light of the fundamentals of expansion in the Indian sub-continent—as well as its bane. With the then prevailing means of communication, it was impossible to control the region south of the Vindhyas from Delhi; and to shift the centre of power from Delhi would be to lose the vital nerve-centre of the Sultanate. But expansion once begun, could hardly be halted till it had reached its consummation on the shores of the two seas. It was this dynamics which made South the bane not only of the Sultans but of the mighty Mughals too.

The abiding contribution of Ghazi Malik was to restore Bengal to the Sultanate, which had been independent under the Balbanides since the days of Kaiqubad. The Sultanate under him entered on its most prosperous—and what was more significant—promising

age. The tragedy was that they were belied by his successor who understood the possibilities of his despotism but not its limitations.

It was rather unfortunate for Tughuluq Shah that he picked up a quarrel with the most prominent Sufi saint of his age, Hazrat Nizam-u'd-din. This conflict, a struggle between the political and religio-social leaders for real power, that is the allegiance of the Muslim masses, introduces a new factor in the history of the Sultanate.

Up to the Tughuluq period, the Sufi movement had been mainly non-political : in fact, it was non-political and would have continued as such had it not been for certain unfortunate and unforeseen developments. Partly responsible for these developments was the towering personality of the greatest of Indian Sufis, Hazrat Nizam-u'd-din.

Amir Khusrau and other writers have testified to the phenomenal popularity enjoyed by Hazrat Nizam-u'd-din among all classes of people. Particularly effective was it on all those classes on which the Sultanate itself depended for existence—the fighting classes, common men and the nobility. This pervading influence could be and sometimes was a challenge to the Sultan himself as in the case of Mubarak Shah. A situation analogous to that in medieval Europe was created—the Sultan had to be prepared for the journey to Canossa, if the situation so warranted.

With all possible good-will, a friction between these two power-clusters, so near each other would have been hard to avoid. Tughuluq Shah's remark that Delhi would be too small to hold them both, was not devoid of truth. It was hard for the Sultan to feel that the ground was being cut away under him—and for whatever reasons mistaken or otherwise—his followers were deserting him for someone else.

It is not clear how the *ulema* behaved in this issue. As a class they had not been happy with the rise of Sufism for the Sufis transcended the legal and juristic codes which were their mainstay. As yet, they had consistently sided with the Sultans, even when they had been disregarded by 'Ala-u'd-din. It may be surmised therefore that they were not unhappy that these two forces came to a head-on clash.

It was fortunate for Muhammad bin Tughuluq that the great saint preceded his father to the grave. Delhi would certainly have

been too narrow to hold them both; and the conflict between them would have rung the death-knell of the Sultanate.

It may be doubted that Muhammad bin Tughuluq connived at the death of his father; but it appears certain that he utilized the Saint's resentment against Tughuluq Shah for his purposes. In full knowledge of the fact that his father was ill-disposed towards the Saint, he associated with him and did not fail to make it widely known that he believed his father not only to be in the wrong but also in the process of committing sacrilege. In fact he exploited his father's unpopularity and cemented his own position in this devious manner. It is not hard to understand why he behaved like this while the danger of supersession hung over his head; but it is difficult to believe that he had no hand in the death of his father and Sultan.

The reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq marks the zenith to which medieval centralisation could reach and the strain which could make it collapse. Muhammad bin Tughuluq inherited a well organised bureaucracy which by his time had attained a fair degree of efficiency and was pliable to the will of the Sultan. The aristocracy had lost its independence and the *ulema* had been too reduced to interfere in political matters. After Hazrat Nizam-u'd-din, no Sufi saint was dominant enough to challenge the prominence of the Sultan. No threat from outside was expected—at least not such as had shaken the very existence of the Sultanate in the days of Balban and 'Ala-u'd-din. The Sultanate was, tardily and hesitantly, on its way to achieve some sort of institutionalisation, some coherence which alone could have guaranteed it a relatively long life.

Yet within a life-time, this entire heritage had been dissipated. The Sultanate had been dealt a blow from which it could never recover. It disintegrated as internal cohesion yielded place to centrifugal forces. An independent Sultanate came into existence even while Muhammad bin Tughuluq was alive, chasing a minor rebel in an out-of-way corner of the land. His successor could retain effective control over the core of the former Sultanate alone and that too by allowing his nobles an authority undreamt of not only in his days but also in the age of Balban and 'Ala-u'd-din.

The problem personality of this unique Indian ruler has been an enigma through the ages. It not only puzzled his contemporaries,

exasperated them and made them his bitter critics, but it bewildered chroniclers who came after. Barni and Isami who knew him and Ibn Battutah who profited by his favour, all stand baffled at the bundle of contradiction this man was; Bada-u'ni is frankly puzzled and hard put to give an opinion. Modern historians, no less perplexed, have made strenuous efforts to rationalise, to "understand" him, with little success. Muhammad bin Tughuluq has continued to be a Sphinx, imperfectly understood and questionably reported in his own days, and a figure who defied analysis in subsequent ones.

The cardinal task, nonetheless, is not to understand the personality system of this unique man, but to evaluate the consequences of his acts, if such a dichotomy can be made. Muhammad bin Tughuluq became a victim of his acknowledgedly encyclopaedic knowledge. He had knowledge of theories and an ambition to apply them for the welfare of his people, but little political sense to implement them. He inherited power, as untrammelled as power could be in his day and he decided to use it for public benefit. His idea of reform lay in an idealist concept of wholesale change, change which would bring the new shape of things in accordance with his pre-conceived notions. He thus delved into everything with a reformer's zeal, only to be disillusioned by what he felt was the refusal of his administrative staff to co-operate with him and the stubbornness of his people in refraining from taking advantage of his beneficent measures. His people were sick, he felt and this malady had to be torn out by force, though it may cause the death of the patient. From a messiah of welfare, he became an avenging angel, dedicated to the task of destroying evil in the world—by force if necessary—and in this missionary endeavour he shattered not only numberless lives but the very warps which inhered in the socio-political fabric of the Sultanate.

Sultan Muhammad thus never understood, despite his great learning, the real nature of the political apparatus whose lever he held. Despotism by its very nature is a limited machine; it can operate only at the highest level and that too administrative. It can function only if it accepts the economic, ethical and social framework of the society in which it operates. It cannot initiate nor carry out any far-reaching reform in any field nor can it cope with deeply seated social or economic problems. For these problems require a different orientation from the one in which the decisions are made only at the top. They demand the voluntary co-operation

of the people. And despotism can compel obedience; it cannot elicit cooperation.

The administrative machinery of despotism is therefore suited only for the negative purposes of maintaining law and order. It requires a metamorphosis not only in its constitution but in its outlook to mould it for any different purpose. Besides, in a system which was introduced and which functioned in the interests of a foreign aristocracy, the incidence was further limited by the area of its operation : it was a military framework with little direct contact with the peasant-agrarian classes. Even in the *doab*, the Heartland of the Sultanate, its contact was not with the peasant-cultivator but with the revenue-collector, whom 'Ala-u'd-din had placed under duress but not exterminated. These revenue collectors did not owe their positions to the Sultan; they could be destroyed but not replaced.

No wonder therefore that this crude apparatus broke down under the strenuous demands made on it. What Sultan Muhammad interpreted as the inefficiency and the mulishness of his older officers, was the failure of the system to meet his exacting requirements. Had he been aware of even this, it would have been impossible for him to change it; the administrative pattern excepting the froth at the surface was nailed down by traditional usages and necessities to the existing order. And it was not amenable to alteration at political behest.

Muhammad bin Tughuluq made equally disastrous mistakes in the horizontal organization of his empire, namely, in organizing provincial administration. His attempt at excessive centralisation, of dismissing trusted lieutenants and lastly of farming out vital parts—every one of these measures served to destroy the homogeneity of his Sultanate which had hardly come into existence.

It is rather redundant to state once again the relation of available communications to the size of a political unit; the tighter the organisation the smaller has to be the unit. Federation or decentralisation has been the modern answer to this problem : a link loose enough to permit autonomy was the medieval one.

Thus when in an age when means of communication and transport were painfully slow and limited, Muhammad bin Tughuluq conceived the ambition of ruling Deogir from Delhi, he was destined for a serious disillusion. When he ordered his lieutenants in Malwa and Gujarat to undertake war against the Afghans for no reason,

except that some of them had rebelled in Multan, he was striving for an impossible end. When he left the Heartland for a distant outpost in a country not so vital for his rule, he seriously weakened his strength in the land which was the nerve-centre of his authority. And finally, when by his barbaric punishments, he alienated all his lieutenants, made formerly loyal classes like the Afghans disloyal, he had taken the final step towards the liquidation of his heritage.

The unsettling conditions introduced by these "reforms" had chain-reactions which lasted all through Sultan Muhammad's reign and dragged him deeper and deeper into the mire of brutal though futile oppression. Many were the devices he tried to get rid of his troubles : he employed foreigners hoping that they would prove more serviceable only to find that they were interested in making quick money and getting away beyond his reach. He promoted humbler men, but found them incapable of meeting the situation. He tried terror, to discover that it was at best only a local and short-lived therapy, but which created repercussions which grew much beyond original dimensions. He even invoked the sanction of the Khalifah hoping to discover in it a talismanic charm which would bring his people round and dispel his troubles; and he realised that the much-venerated investiture was worth nothing more than a "scrap of paper".

In his pursuit of doing good to his people, Muhammad bin Tughuluq shed more blood, caused greater distress and wrought far more havoc than had been caused in the relatively more mundane ventures of 'Ala-u'd-din. Essentially, the two men were different—'Ala-u'd-din was practical and pragmatic though brutal while Muhammad bin Tughuluq was an idealist and visionary and conscientious. Thus while 'Ala-u'd-din's objectives were definite and practicable, Muhammad bin Tughuluq's were inchoate and vague : while the former was primarily selfish the latter tended to be altruistic. In brief, while 'Ala-u'd-din waged wars, Muhammad bin Tughuluq was inclined to enter into crusades.

This doctrinaire blindness linked with the self-righteousness which Muhammad bin Tughuluq could never abjure remained the bane of his reign, leading to a colossal failure. It is not strange therefore that he became a neurotic embittered and frustrated, a monomaniac bent at a vendetta in which he lost his life. Prestige became ultimately his deity, for which he was prepared to sacrifice everything, even to chase Taghi to the gates of hell. He failed to

see that he was staking too much on this mad venture, that all through his life he had afforded more importance to the individual event than to the complete picture.

In his failure in fact, Muhammad bin Tughuluq epitomises the failure of the reformer-logician carried away by his own logic—so far that he could not see the ground below him.

The reign of Firuz Shah marks the last lap of the Sultanate as an all-India power or rather as an all-north India power. The process of decline which commenced with Muhammad bin Tughuluq slowly gained in strength during his weak rule, reducing the Sultanate to be one of many which rose in different regional centres. A period of disintegration in which central authority has given place to independent rule, a process often repeated in Indian history, commences once again with the reign of this, the last of the great Sultans.

In a way, this process was inevitable. During the century and a half since the establishment of Muslim rule in northern India, Muslim arms had penetrated into most of the accessible regions of India. Under Aibek and Iltutmish, the Indo-Gangetic basin passed under their rule and attempts to include Malwa were made. Balban's rule witnessed a period of consolidation and a reassertion of Dehli authority in the east, besides serious attempts to control routes to south and west. Under 'Ala-u'd-din, a spurt of expansion carried Muslim arms to the extreme South, while placing the Deccan within their sphere of influence and Gujarat within the Empire itself. Tughuluq Shah tried to bind the Deccan more closely to his throne; while Muhammad Tughuluq not only made attempts to conquer the extreme South but make the Deccan a province of his Empire, thus setting in motion a reaction.

This hegemony thus brought into forced union many regions which had long and immediate experience of independent existence and developed subcultures of their own. Almost automatically they formed into distinct units with separate governors and distinct administrative systems. Acculturisation of Muslim rulers to their assignments the growth of an indigenous Muslim population and a localised ruling aristocracy created a sense of autonomy in the province which became immediately conscious as the yoke of central authority became heavy and exacting.

The rebellions in Daulatabad, Malwa, Gujarat and even Awadh represent the rising consciousness of the provincial ruling classes,

as for instance the Afghans in Gujarat, that the time had come to break off the link with the centre. For their outlook had oriented itself to the land in which they had settled and the interests of the central power under whose aegis they had come there, came second. Thus with this consciousness, the province became ripe to break off its links, all the more so, if its colonists felt afraid of or aggrieved at the policies of the ruling Sultan.

The most important consideration which remained however was the strength of the central authority to command allegiance. Here transport and communication and the personality of the Sultan played a great part. The earliest to secede was Bengal; despite Balban's savage punishment and Tughuluq Shah's campaign, this eastern province had never formed an integral part of the Delhi Sultanate; heavy rains and poor communication and a climate that often proved fatal to Central-Asian immigrants, gave it an immunity to conquest and a strong predilection to autonomy. It was followed by the trans-Vindhya provinces, Gujarat, Malwa, Jaunpore, Bihar, Multan and the rest. The Sultanate of Dehli became limited to what was its Heartland, the *doab*, between the capital and Kara (modern Allahabad).

Moreover, such a break-up was necessary if Muslim power was to build its roots in the people. So long as the horizontal base remained wide enough to encompass the whole of this vast land, the vertical implementation of authority was limited to the surface strata alone. Deeper and more intensive conquest of the country, the expropriation of the second level of Rajput landed classes and the processes which could lead to a real comingling of the two cultures and the two political systems, could be effected only by administrative and power structures which were exclusively oriented towards the area in which they operated.

The contribution of the Sultanate had been to break down the wall of first resistance and to establish a far-flung Muslim empire in India. The permeation of individual parts with Muslim authority and culture and the extension of its influence in distant parts was the task of governments and rulers exclusively concerned with those areas.

Despite the limitations imposed on him by his predecessor, the reign of Firuz Tughuluq was a definitely retrogressive phase in the history of the Sultanate. He was the only Sultan of Delhi who

deliberately chose the way of relaxing authority to the extent of impairing the efficiency of administration, as a state policy designed to win the loyalty and cooperation of his lieutenants. And he was also the Sultan to give up the attempt of the earlier Sultans to focus in themselves the allegiance and loyalty of as wide a class of people as possible. By affiliating himself with the aims and ambitions of only a segment of his people, the Sunni Muslims, Firuz Shah repudiated the process of evolution for the last fifty years. Thirdly, it was his reign that clearly demonstrated that the flush of expansion which had carried Muslim arms across the length and breadth of India, was over. The Sultanate was exhausted, was on the defensive; the invulnerable military machine was simply no more.

Firuz Shah's relaxation of control was something more than a reaction against Muhammad bin Tughuluq's excesses. It went to the extreme length of virtually abdicating in favour of his *wazir*, the extremely capable Khan-i-Jahan; and moreover of placing his powerful landed lieutenants even beyond the *wazir's* purview, thus making them virtually independent of all royal control. The administrative muddle it could create is indicated in the case of Shams-u'd-din Abu Raja, detailed at length by Afif; even Khan-i-Jahan failed to check the exactions of this corrupt official (who had however a record of good service under provincial chiefs but without much reward) until the Sultan himself was incensed enough to degrade him.

It led moreover to the grant of virtual autonomy to provincial governors who came to enjoy long terms of complete independence; so much so that the last of them in Gujarat prepared for independence and the one who was sent to punish him actually did so. It caused the transformation of the army—the most vital part of the Sultanate—from a mercenary force to a feudalised one dependent on money-changers for its sustenance. An agglomeration of non-martial slaves, useful only as a rabble, completed the dismal picture of this military machine which failed in Bengal, in Ranthambhore and finally in Sind. It was not that Firuz Tughuluq was no general but the very efficiency of the army was giving way under his too easy handling.

The free distribution of *jagirs*, the growth in the power of the feudalised bureaucratic machine and the grant of virtual autonomy to discrete units marks the key-note of Firuz Shah's rule. Uncons-

ciously Firuz Shah accepted the maxim that, that government is best which governs the least. He reduced the functions of central government by making units independent of it. Friction between the landed aristocracy and the bureaucracy was thus minimised though not obviated, and Firuz Shah slipped into the role of a peace-maker when his subordinates came to loggerheads. The relegation of the Sultan to the role of an umpire among the various groups in his Sultanate was surely an innovation of Firuz Tughuluq.

The redeeming feature of this otherwise dismal picture of decadence is furnished by the welfare measures undertaken by Firuz Shah and the attention he paid to irrigation and town-construction. This indeed is a welcome feature of his reign, something which shows Firuz Tughuluq in a kindly light as a benefactor which he no doubt was. Yet with all his attention to city-construction and building, Firuz Tughuluq was not able to erect a single structure which would approach 'Ala-u'd-din's in strength and elegance; nothing could demonstrate more positively that the inspiration which had shaped the Sultanate was a thing of the past.

Much less welcome were the measures which the Sultan himself elaborates in his *Futuhat*, measures which show him to have been at best a narrow-minded sectarian who had not got out of the grooves of thinking on communal lines. In this respect, he is sharply distinct from his predecessor, who though a tyrant, was much above the religious prejudices of his age. The humanistic religiosity which Sultan Firuz Shah affects, though possibly genuine, has a touch of the self-complacent in it. It excludes even the non-Sunni Muslim from its orbit and breathes a feeling that all but those whom the Sultan favoured were of a slightly lower status, not deserving the attention which he abundantly showered. Needless to add, this attitude was a reversal of the process which had gone on for the last half-century, making the Sultanate what today we would call a secular state.

This policy—and the *Futuhat* indicates this—was due to the Sultan's feeling that he owed a higher allegiance than the merely political and that he was subserving a larger cause than what he would do if he looked to political values alone. It also should be remembered that the class of Sunni Muslims with which the Sultan identified himself and whose culture-objectives, he strove to fulfil was a much larger one than before, and his concept of a religious fraternity was wider and more embracing than either the closed aristocracy

of the Turks or the narrow tribalism of the Lodis and the Surs. It stressed religion but it viewed birth with indifference. Indian Muslims could and did occupy high positions of state; indeed, one of them occupied the one second to the highest.

The unusual prosperity in the reign of Sultan Firuz points to the resilience of the Indian economy if blessed by good rains and little interference. The attention which Firuz Shah gave to irrigation measures and encouragement to cultivation, no doubt were important factors: but the most important factor was that it had been left alone. It was a fairly long stretch of calm prosperity before the country was plunged again into a welter of chaos and anarchy.

The reign of Sultan Firuz Tughuluq is the last one which may interest a student viewing India as a whole. After him the Sultanate of Delhi becomes a regional affair, on par with Ahmedabad, Jaunpore, Mandu and Gulbarga, where cultural sequences of greater importance come to the forefront. It is with the rise of the Mughals that Delhi and Agra become once again the stage on which the history of India is set. But before that, it is to Bengal and Jaunpore, to Gujarat and Malwa that we have to turn for the history of this land.

Part II

GUJARAT AS A PART OF THE SULTANATE OF DELHI

Chapter IV

THE BEGINNING OF TURKISH RULE IN GUJARAT

Madhava : legend and history—The first Invasion of Gujarat — The Second Invasion — Nature of Conquest: Alp Khan's policy—Alp Khan and the Jains

IT HAS now been amply proved that the story of Madhava and his betrayal, is something more than the legend which attempts to explain a national disaster. Even with the accretion of later stories around the favourite theme, it appears wrong to dispute the existence of such a person and his collusion with the invaders.[1]

The motivation which underlies the treachery is more difficult to decide. Bardic stories inform us that "the raja (Karna) took away from her husband, Madhuv's wife who was a pudmeenee and he slew Keshuv. On the death of his brother, Madhuv went to Delhi, to Allah-od-deen and brought in the Mohummedans".[2] Padmanabha, the author of *Kanhad-de prabandh* declares that Madhava, insulted by the king, vowed that he would not touch food in Gujarat until he had brought the Turks there. He then went to 'Ala-u'd-din to whom he reported that Raja Karna of Gujarat had abandoned the *kshatriya dharma* and seized his brother Keshav's wife.[3] Nainsi, the seventeenth century chronicler of Rajasthan writes that Karna had kept the daughter of his Nagar minister as a mistress in his household.[4]

The author of *Dharma-ranya*, a *pauranic* history of the Modha brahmins written between 1356/1299 and 1500/1443, castigates

[1] Some major authorities for the first Turkish campaign in Gujarat have been cited in the following paragraphs: and they speak of Madhav's existence. In addition, contemporary evidence supports this fact. In the colophon of a Sanskrit text, completed in VS 1353, Bhadarwa Sudi 13/August 12, 1296, the king's name is given as Sarangdev and the minister's as Madhava. Quoted in D. K. Shastri, *Gujarat-no madhya-kalin Rajput Itihas*, Ahmedabad, Gujarat Vidya Sabha, 2009/1952, p. 488, fn. 1.

[2] *Rasmala* of A. K. Forbes. Edited by H. G. Rawlinson. In 2 volumes, Oxford University Press, 1924, I, p. 266.

[3] *Kanhad-de prabandh* of Padmanabha, Edited by K. B. Vyas, Rajasthan Puratana Granthmala: Jaipur, Rajasthan Puratattva Mandir, 2010/1953, pp. 3-70.

[4] *Muhnot Nainsi ki khyat*, edited by R. N. Dugar (In 2 volumes, Banaras Nagari Pracharini Sabha, 1982/1926 & 1991/1934). I. 213 & II. 479.

Madhava bitterly and declares him to be responsible for destroying *kshatriya rajya* by replacing it with *mlecchha rajya*, in the reign of the powerful king Karna.[1] In a more prosaic and matter-of-fact tone, the contemporary Jain author Jina-prabha Suri informs us that "instigated by Madhava, the Turkish invaders came into Gujarat".[2] In another composition, Merutunga, the author of the famous *Prabandh chintamani*, tells us that Madhava invited the *yavanas* into Gujarat.[3]

It is evident therefore that only the Rajput accounts assign the cause for Madhava's conduct. The others, while critical of his act, are silent regarding its motivation. Yet, there does not appear sufficient warrant to dispute the fact that it was a mortal insult which drove the otherwise loyal minister to the enemies of his master.

The presumption that something had gone seriously wrong with the Waghela state is indicated by his strange passivity in the face of enemy invasion. Not once, but twice did Raja Karna supinely abandon his capital to the enemy, and suffered expulsion without having defended his heritage.[4] Such strange demoralisation can be explained only by an internal breakdown, and of this crisis, the Rajput authorities furnish an adequate explanation.

Madhava came from a class which had associated closely with the Rajputs in the affairs of state: under Karna, he had been second only to the king. That such a man should forget himself and become a traitor to his religion, to his country and to his master, does not seem likely, unless he had been wounded at too vital a spot. And what provocation could be greater than the one Rajput authorities aver Raja Karna to have given? Whether it was his wife or his brother's—it is unlikely that it was his daughter as Nainsi writes—such an offence could only have one answer.

The fact that in the Murlidhar inscription, Karna has been des-

[1] Quoted in Shastri, *op. cit.*, p. 492; also in K. M. Munshi, *Glory that was Gurjaradesh*, 2 volumes, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1955, II. p. 488.

[2] *Vividha-tirtha-Kalpa* of Jinaprabha Suri, Edited by Jinavijaya. Part I: Shantiniketan, Adhisthata Singhi Jain Jnanapitha, 1990/1934, p. 30.

[3] Purattatva IV. 268. The work in question is Merutunga's *Vichar-sreni*.

[4] Infra, 81-3. No writer, Rajput, Jain or Turk, credits Raja Karna with having offered even the feeblest opposition to the invaders. It seems therefore difficult accept Munshi's statement that Karna fought well, or that the stories againts him are merely "the clouds which surround those who fail in life". Munshi, *op. cit.*, pp. 399-401.

cribed as the guardian of his people, is not a sufficient warrant for dismissing his story. It is not impossible for even an exemplary ruler to commit an act in a fit of passion which he would bitterly rue afterwards. And Karna seems to have, according to legends, shed tears of blood for his act.

Like his master, Madhava must have bitterly repented of his handiwork. We know but little of the subsequent history of this sorry and pathetic figure of a man who had the morbid satisfaction of slaking his thirst for vengeance in the ashes of his country and his people. Surely, his end must not have been a happy one.

The inducements offered by the treacherous Waghela minister would not have been the only factor which pursuaded, 'Ala-u'd-din to send an army into Gujarat. More powerful must have been the stories of the wealth of this sea-borne kingdom which the land and wealth hungry Sultan must have heard during his raid in the South. And thus when an opportunity was offered, it was seized with avidity.

'Ala-u'd-din commissioned two of his most trusted lieutenants to undertake this task—his brother Ulugh Khan who was stationed at Multan[1] and Nusrat Khan in Delhi. Nusrat Khan started on Jamad I. 20, 698/February 23, 1299.[2] Ulugh Khan possibly left

[1] *Tarikh-i-Sind*, also called *Tarikh-i-Ma'sumi* of Muhammad Ma'sum 'Ali, edited by U. M. Daudpota, p. 44.

[2] Zia Barni places the Invasion in the "beginning of the third year of the *Alai* reign" (TFS 251). The beginning of the official year is to be reckoned from the coronation in the capital in the last days of 695, after Zil-hujjah 22, 695/ October 22, 1296 (KF .7). The third year would therefore commence with 698/1298-99.

The same year is given in the Text of the *Khaza'in-ul'l-futuh* though in the translation, it has been given wrongly as 699/1299-100 (KF 35). According to Khusrau in the *Khaza'in*, the expedition left Delhi on Jamad I. 20, 698/ February 23, 1299.

Other Persian writers, with the solitary exception of Firishtah give 698 as the year of attack. Wassaf has Z'il-qada 698/August 1299. (Elliot III. 42-4). Bada-u'ni mentions 698 while Nizam-u'd-din literally follows Barni; so also does Yahya bin Sarhindi who writes 698. (MT, Trans. I. 255; TA, I. 141; *Tarikh-i-Mubarak Shahi*, Trans. 74). Firishtah writes 697/ 1297-8 (TF, I. 103).

This information is supported by a Sanskrit inscription at Somnath, according to which the Turks attacked Somnath on June 6, 1299 (NIA I. 696). Evidently, the force which left Delhi by the end of February had reached Somnath by the beginning of June.

In *Vividha-tirtha-kalpa* of Jinaprabha Suri, VS 1356/1299-1300 is given as

at the same time and marched across Rajputana, raiding Jaisalmer on the way.[1]

The two armies came together before entering Mewar; a skirmish took place while they were skirting Chittor but as the objective of the expedition was Gujarat, they avoided any serious conflict with Rana Samar Singh of Chittor.[2] Successfully passing through the dangerous and hilly border tract between Mewar and Gujarat, the Turkish army entered the plains and encircled the fort of Modasa.[3]

The route taken was undoubtedly slightly used and difficult. It was defended by the yet unsubdued forts of Rathambhore and Chittor and only expert guidance would have led them through the tangle of hills which the border tract between Mewar, Malwa and Gujarat is. The great advantage which it had, was that it lay for its maximum length within the territory of the Sultan and secondly, it avoided the long and dangerous march across Rajputana which ended in the Abu ingress into Gujarat, which due to its proximity to Patan, was likely to be well defended.

The Rajput defenders of Modasa were taken by surprise and allowed themselves to be besieged. As Padmanabha writes, panic and chaos heralded the advent of the invading army and the fort was surrounded after a sharp battle, though within a short time only. [4] With this serious impediment removed, the Turkish army had their way open into Gujarat: 'Dandavya, Dandhavya, Chidottar and Dhandhar', i.e., the north Gujarat plains were full of panic and alarm.[5]

The army itself proceeded to Asawal which it captured. From there, it turned north to its most important objective, Anhilwara Patan. Raja Karna seems to have been himself taken by surprise. Legends point to his being overwhelmed by the realisation of the enormity of the crime he had committed; Isami writes that he consulted his advisers and they counselled him to abandon his

the year of attack (VTK 30). In another work by Jain author Merutung, the year 1360/1303-04 is given as the year of attack. (*Purattatva* IV. 268). The year given by the Persian chroniclers agrees broadly with the one given by Jinaprabha Suri. The other date obviously refers to the next attack. (*infra*, 83).

It is evident that Firishtah's date is wrong; the Idar inscription proves without doubt that Karna was on his throne on VS 1354, Kartik Shukla, 11/October 27, 1297/Muharram 9, 697.

[1] TMS, *op. cit.*, 44. [2] Ojha, URI, 475-83.
[3] KdP, 8-12 : 12/57 ; VTK, 30. [4] KdP, 12-13. [5] VTK, 30.

capital and lie low till the Turkish tempest had blown over, and then emerge and recover the kingdom. To Karna, this was welcome advice and he abandoned the capital to the invaders without any serious difficulty.[1]

The splendid capital of the Solankis thus fell without much effort in the hands of the invaders—surely, a prize which they had not hoped to gain so easily. The spoils were immense. And as the immediate object of the Turkish leaders was not immediate conquest, they allowed their soldiers to gorge themselves to the full.[2] "The treasures, elephants, and women-folk of Raja Karna," Barni writes, "fell into the hands of the army of Islam."[3] One of such captured women was Rani Kanwala devi.

After having thoroughly despoiled Patan, the Turkish leaders felt the necessity of appeasing their conscience and more truly, the culture-ideals of their soldiers. They therefore marched to the south-eastern tip of the peninsula of Saurashtra, to repeat the feat which had given Mahmud of Ghazna, an enviable position and to claim for themselves the credit of desecrating the "idol which after the conquest of Sultan Mahmud and the destruction of the temple, had been given the name of Somnath."[4] The campaign was politically superfluous but culturally necessary. The temple was not yielded without resistance; two Vaja warriors, Malasuta and Padamla, laid down their lives for the defence of the temple and fell on the doors of the shrine, when on June 6, 1299, the Turks ravaged the city and its temple.[5] The heroic resistance however availed little, for the Turks entered the temple, broke the *lingam* and carried it in defilement to Delhi.

The sack of Somnath appears to have ended the direct purpose of the campaign and the Turkish army broke up to loot the country more effectively. Nusrat Khan returned to the mainland and plundered the rich and ancient sea-port of Khambhat (Cambay).[6] The inhabitants of this beautiful city, noted by Ibn Battutah for its excellent city architecture, were mostly foreign merchants, most

[1] In no contemporary history, Jain, Rajput or Persian, is it suggested that Karna made a bold stand for his capital as suggested by Munshi. (*Glory that was Gurjaradesh*, BBU Edn. II. pp. 408-09). (FS 242: 4679—244: 4764: Wassaf in Eliot III. pp. 42-4).

[2] TFS 252: for an account of the Gujarat capital then, see V. G. Desai, "Gurjara Rajadhani", *Purattatva* IV. 205-29.

[3] TFS 251: FS 243: 4702-10. [4] KF 35-6: TFS 251.

[5] NIA I. 696. [6] TFS 251.

of them Arab.[1] Their religious affiliation, however, did not prevent Nusrat Khan from applying the screw to them and relieving them of great wealth. The most precious single item of this loot was, however, a eunuch slave, seized from an Arab merchant.

It was Malik Kafur, who was to write his name in the history of medieval India.[2] Several other towns subsequently felt the weight of the invaders sword; it does not appear however, that they had gone as far south as Rander.[3]

Ulugh Khan had in the meantime raided the ancient town of Vanthali and possibly engaged the Mandalik ruler of Junagadh.[4] Probably, he also plundered other towns in Saurashtra. He then returned to Asawal, leaving a trail of desolation behind him.

The two leaders came together at Asawal.[5] The joint army then retraced its steps towards Delhi, passing through the Abu gap, skirting Jalor, where the generals attempted to shear their soldiers of part of the immense plunder they had seized, and faced a mutiny in consequence.[6]

The country was left shattered but peaceful after the retreat of the Turkish army. No effort was made immediately to consolidate the ravaged area into a conquered province; no governor was appointed nor was any contact made with Raja Karna, asking him to accept a subordinate status. Literally, the Turks turned their back on what was virtually a conquered area.

In consequence, Karna was able to return to his capital and gather the strands of his broken authority and resume his rule. How he fared in his miserable condition, we do not know.

But only a few years of grace had been granted to the unfortunate monarch. Khusrau writes that instigated by his former queen, who was now high in favour with 'Ala-u'd-din, the Sultan asked him to send his daughter, Deval devi, as a bride for his heir-apparent, Khizr Khan, a demand which he accepted joyfully and was

[1] Rehla 172. [2] TFS 251.

[3] KdP 14-23. Padmanabha gives a highly coloured picture of the invasion and in his account of the destruction wrought by the invading army in the towns of Gujarat, he includes the names of almost all the towns. In no other chronicle is the expedition towards southern Gujarat mentioned.

[4] KdP 14-15 : VTK 30; Jinavijayaji in *Purattatva* IV. 266-7; *Bombay Gazetteer* VIII (Kathiawar) 679-80. Vanthali was situated about nine miles south of Junagadh and was an ancient and famous mart.

[5] VTK 30. [6] TFS 251-2.

preparing to send her with large presents to Delhi, when the Turkish army descended upon him—for the Sultan had changed his mind and had decided to include Gujarat as a part of his empire.[1]

Probably, 'Ala-u'd-din asked Karna to acknowledge his suzerainty and, as a mark of submission, send his daughter to the Court, a demand which he was in no position to defy immediately. He therefore agreed to it and while, in public he was preparing his daughter's trousseau, he set preparations afoot for resistance, if necessary. This somehow came to the Sultan's ears and the consequence was the despatch of an expedition to oust Karna from Gujarat.

In 704/1304-5, when 'Ala-u'd-din gained respite from Mongol attacks, he commissioned two of his nobles, Malik Ahmad Jhampan and Panjuman to undertake this task. The Turkish expedition advanced rapidly and seems to have reached Gujarat almost without any prior warning to the defenders.[2] In fact, a night march undertaken to cover the last eight miles to the Gujarat capital, brought them to its gate while its ruler was almost unaware of the impending catastrophe[3]—a state of affairs which could not but have been due to the dislocation still being suffered by the vanquished.

Karna had little option but to abandon his capital to the invaders. From Patan, he fled to Deogir but Raja Ramdeo was much too apprehensive of 'Ala-u'd-din's wrath to harbour him. He had to go on to Raja Pratap Rudra Deo of Warangal who was chivalrous enough to offer the fugitive king an asylum. It was here probably that Karna ended his days.[4]

The Turks who had now come to rule not ravage Patan appear to have treated the city well. Karna's abandoned palaces and household were however taken over and in it was a young girl reports of whose beauty had reached 'Ala-u'd-din and for whom he had sent in the earlier demand.[5] Very probably, it was not in Patan that she was found; Karna had already sent her ahead to Deogir and it was one of the numerous parties which spread out from the capital which were able to come upon her escort and secure her.[6]

[1] *Ashiqa* 84-5.

[2] No idea of the route taken by the invading army is given by the chroniclers but it appears that the surprise was made possible by the invaders coming from the Abu-Palanpur gap, close to Patan.

[3] FS 278: 5363-5. [4] FS 278: 5363-5.

[5] Vide *Ashiqa* and FS, cited above: *infra* 83-6. [6] *Ashiqa* 85-7.

Malik Ahmad stayed for a month or two in Patan and sent to his master the tidings of his success. 'Ala-u'd-din was naturally elated and asked the Malik to entrust the newly-conquered province to one of his lieutenants and return to the capital without delay, bringing Karna's children, especially Deval devi with him.[1] He was suitably rewarded when he reached his master's presence.

Soon after, 'Ala-u'd-din sent a messenger to his brother-in-law, Alp Khan, in Multan, conferring the province of Gujarat on him and asking him to proceed there.[2] This seems to have taken place in 705/1305-06, for the invasion had taken place about an year earlier.

On receipt of this order, Alp Khan left for Gujarat and probably by the end of 705/1306, took up his new assignment in Patan.

The Turkish invasion and the incorporation of Gujarat in the Sultanate of Delhi, marked a new chapter in the history of this land. Immediately, it meant the displacement of the Rajput central authority by the Turk.

The Turks succeeded in breaking down the apex of the Rajput power-structure but not its lower echelons. The Rajputs were fragmented but not shattered. Important and powerful Rajput strongholds remained hostile and unsubdued; the whole of Saurashtra continued virtually unaffected, except for passing raids. The entire border region, which included bastions like Idar and Champanir gained in strength as the refuge zone, the asylum of those who had lost their patrimony in the plans. Even in the plains, the smaller Rajput landholders remained undisturbed, on the acknowledgement of the suzerainty of the new rulers and the payment of tribute.

For nearly a century, no effort was made to disturb this order, with the Turks in the apex maintaining an uneasy truce with the Rajput landholders under them while also continuing an intermittent warfare with those outside. The effort required a degree of consolidation which could not be effected while Gujarat remained a part of a larger whole. It was only with the rise of the Sultanate of Gujarat that a systematic attempt was made to reduce hostile centres and impose the yoke of the central authority over distant outposts.

In the meanwhile, Turkish rule remained confined to cities where

[1] FS 278-5367-73. [2] FS 279 : 5377-280 : 5392.

commandants with garrisons maintained their control over Rajput landholders from whom they exacted the maximum tribute they could. In addition, colonies of foreign Muslims were planted in strategic areas to act as additional sources of strength. Such were the Afghans who rebelled during the reign of Muhammad bin Tughuluq.

In the towns, the Turks conciliated the Muslim populace, which mainly was composed of traders, indigenous like the Ismaili Shiahs or foreign as the Arabs. To Alp Khan must go the credit of initiating this statesmanlike policy. Two inscriptions, one from Cambay and the other from the neighbouring town of Petlad testify to this generous attitude.

The Petlad inscription is earlier and formed a part of a mosque which no longer exists; it was therefore found in the tomb of Baba Arjun Shah which has another inscription which antedates Turkish conquest by about sixty years. This later inscription reads as under, "*The building of this mosque was completed during the reign of the great Sultan Ala-u'd-dunya-wa-u'd-din and the administration of the most benevolent Khan, Alp Khan and the governorship of the chief of the nobles, Ikhtiyar-u'd-din . . . , through the commendable efforts of his servant, Badr-u'd-din Dinar . . . auspicious month of Ramzan, 713/December 1313.*"[1]

The Arabic inscription in Khambhat belongs to the tomb of Ikhtiyar-u'd-daula's tomb. It reads: "*This is the grave of . . . the Saiyid . . . Ikhtiyar-u'd-daula wa-u'd-din Bahr bak in the city of Khambayat . . . . He died on the night on Tuesday the 17th Jamada II., 716 (September 6, 1316) . . . .*"[2] It is possible that the noble Ikhtiyar-ud-din mentioned in both these inscriptions may be the same man.

Several other inscriptions of Cambay testify to the rich and influential community of Arab merchants in that city, a section which Alp Khan appears to have taken pains to conciliate and reassure.[3] It was necessary in view of the disturbed condition of the country for the last several years and the way in which Nusrat Khan had treated this city.

In Patan, Alp Khan had left a lasting mark of his rule—the

[1] G. Yazdani, "Arabic Inscriptions in the shrine of Arjun Shah of Petlad". *Epigraphica Indo-Moslemica*, 1917-18, pp. 32-3.

[2] *Ibid.*, 38.

[3] *Indian Archaeology* 1959-60: Persian & Arabic Inscriptions.

Adina mosque which probably was the noblest in Gujarat. It was probably a converted temple, as 'Ali Muhammad Khan remarked and it survived till the last year of the eighteenth century. It has been so completely levelled to the ground that even its site has been obscured by fields.[1]

The conciliatory policy followed by Alp Khan in Gujarat is best reflected in his attitude towards the Jains, the prosperous trading community which had had an exceptionally favourable time under the Waghelas. Jain accounts dealing with the renovation of the pilgrimage centre, Shatrunjaya, give a fairly detailed account of this policy.

It appears that in 1369/1312-13, the Turkish troops which were passing through the peninsula of Saurashtra, came across and desecrated the temples of Shatrunjaya. This sacrilege caused widespread anguish in the Jain community until a prominent Jain of Patan, Samra Sah undertook to renovate the temples. This he was able to do with great pomp and for doing so asked and received the permission of Alp Khan who encouraged the project by making a donation for the purpose.

The anguish caused by the sacrilege and the restoration of the sacred temples by Samra Sah is the theme of two Jain works, the *Samra-Rasu* by an anonymous poet and the Sanskrit, *Nabhinandan-jinoddhar Prabandh*, written by Kakka-suri. The former is relatively brief and nearly contemporary; the latter more detailed and written about twenty-two years later in 1393/1336-37.[2]

[1] (The) *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* of 'Ali Muhammad Khan. Edited by Nawab Ali. 2 volumes and a supplement. Gaekwar Oriental Series: Baroda Oriental Institute 1927-28, I. 36. Also M. S. Commissariat, *A History of Gujarat*, Vol. I. Longman Green & Co., 1938, pp. 10-1.

[2] This incident is also mentioned in the *Vividh Tirtha kalpa* of Jina-prabha Suri. (VTK 5: 119-20). The *Samra-rasu* has been published in the *Prachina Gurjara kavya Sangraha*, Part I., edited by C. D. Dalal, Baroda, Central Library, 1920, pp. 27-38; and also in *Jain Aitihasik Gurjara kavya Sangraha*, edited by Sriman Jinavijayaji, Bhavanagar, Sri Jain Atmananda Sabha 1982/1926, pp. 238-53. In the same book, the Editor has included a learned and informative note on Samra Sah (II. 117-70). In another work, Muni Jinavijayaji has described the *uddhars* of Shatrunjaya. *Shatrunjaya tirth-o-ddhar prabandh*; Bhavanagar, Jain Atmananda Sabha, 1973/1916.

The other work, *Nabhinandan jinoddhar prabandh* has been published separately, with a Gujarati translation by Pandit Bhagwandas Harakhchand. Shri Hemchandracharya Jain Granthmala, Ahmedabad, Jain Vidyarthi Mandir, 1985/1928. The author of this *prabandha-kavya* was a disciple of Sidhhasen Suri, the *guru* of Desal Sah of Patan.

Both the *rasu* and the *prabandh* are in the praise of Samra Sah, or Samar Sinha as he is referred to in the *prabandh*, the author of the renovation. He belonged to a rich family of Patan with commercial connexions all over the country and his father Desal Sah was its head. While the elder brother lived in Deogir, the younger, Samra Sah, stayed with his father and looked after the family business there. His estimable qualities and pleasant personality had made him a trusted friend and counsellor of the first Muslim governor of Gujarat, Alp Khan.

The injury done to the holy temples shocked and wounded this religious household, especially Desal Sah. The old man carried his woe to his *guru* Sidhhasen Suri and was comforted by him. The learned savant ascribed the calamity to the influence of *kaliyuga* and suggested to the sorrowing Desal Sah that the best way to use his wealth and influence was to carry out an *uddhar* of these temples.

The suggestion was welcomed by the pious old man and Samra Sah when he learnt of the ambition of his father, took upon himself the responsibility of fulfilling it. The first step in this direction, was naturally to secure the royal permission and for this, Samra Sah waited upon Alp Khan with munificent presents. Alp Khan received the supplicant graciously and not only granted the permission readily but formally ratified it by a *farman* and also gave him a casket of jewels to be used for the pious task.

Thus encouraged and honoured, Samra Sah undertook his task in real earnest.[1] The *rasu* and the *prabandh* describe in meticulous detail the long and lavish procedure and the ceremonies attendant on the renovation of the temples and the reinstallation of sacred images therein. By virtue of his accomplishment of this glorious task, Samra Sah came to be known as the *Sangha-pati*.[2] He came in line with those great figures who had carried out earlier *uddhars*, legendary ones like Pundarik, Bharat, Sagar, Pandavas and Javadi.[3] The hero's reception which he received when he returned to his city and his subsequent position both in his community and outside, testify to his stature subsequent to his great achievement.

[1] NJP III. 1-18. Both the Sultan and his deputy are showered with praise. 'Ala-u'd-din is compared to Indra while Alp Khan to Brahma, as both the destroyer and the renovator of temples.

[2] The full title of the *Samra-rasu* is, as given in *Jain Aitihasik Gurjara kavya Sangrah* is *Sanghapati Samar Sinha Ras.* (p. 238). Muni Jinavijayaji refers to him as *Sanghapati Samar Sinha* (II. 117).

[3] NJP III. 43-272.

Evidently, the Turkish rulers were able to establish cordial relations with the influential Jain community even while the struggle with the Rajputs was still on. In fact, the initiative was taken by the Jains themselves and the Turks had merely to respond, to meet half-way, an open invitation. It was a statesmanlike act of Alp Khan to conciliate a community as rich and as talented as the Jain; but on their part too, the Jains acted wisely in wasting no tears over the expelled Waghelas and in making the best of what had been a sorry business.[1]

Such an attitude towards political power was surely not unexpected in a community which relied exclusively on commerce for its livelihood and to whom security was a prime consideration. To the Rajput, defeat in the field meant disgrace and death, and compromise for him therefore was not an easy choice, if a choice at all. To the Jain, a shift in a political balance merely meant a change of personnel at the seat of power—a new potentate to be wooed and won over. After the initial holocaust was over, he had once again patiently to start from the beginning and arrive at the position he had held before the storm. And in this task, the goodwill of the new rulers was the first necessity.

The values by which an individual so oriented directed his life, were not political but social. The attempt was to safeguard communal symbols and uphold communal ideals. This was true of both the Jains and the Hindus. To both the fall of Patan was much less painful than the fall of Somnath or Shatrunjaya, and the Turks were hateful not because they had established their sway over this land but because they struck at the cherished symbols and ideals of the community.

Such an attitude placed the brunt of the defence of a country on the wielders of political power alone—in this case the Rajputs. The fragmentation of society into minuscular units moreover, and the relative indifference of these communities to political power, limited the struggle only to the battlefield. The relatively easy success of the Turks in subduing this land stemmed partly from this factor too.

[1] In the beginning of Chapter III, Kakka Suri praises 'Ala-u'd-din in significant terms as the conqueror of Deogir, the vanquisher of Raja Hammir of Sapaldaksh, captor of the Raja of Chitrakoot, and "due to whose prowess Raja Karna of Gujarat had fled his land and died a pauper in alien lands . . . ." (III. 1-6).

The last phase of the reign of 'Ala-u'd-din marked the end of the long and successful administration of Alp Khan. His success in keeping the province pacified and popularising the new regime in influential classes is testified not only by the wealth of details pertaining to him recorded in non-Persian sources but also by the disturbances which followed his departure, and his subsequent assassination in Delhi due to, as Barni, Khusrau and Isami aver, to the machinations of Malik Kafur.[1]

Alp Khan can be called the founder of Muslim rule in Gujarat though it was nearly a century before the roots of the new regime went below the upper crust of society. It was he who imparted stability and poise to a perilously balanced regime in a conquered country; he not only softened the harsh blow of conquest but attracted the conquered to the new rule. It was a pity that the lead given by him was not followed; few of his successors had his statesmanship and none had the confidence in the measure given to Alp Khan during his tenure in Gujarat.

The last days of Alp Khan in the capital were not pleasant: He was recalled on the instance of Malik Kafur, when the Sultan was growing disaffected towards his family members. Malik Kafur accused him of being the source of all trouble—of inciting the queen and the princes not only against the favourite but also against the Sultan.[2] The Sultan refused to countenance the charges against his loyal lieutenant; but he also took no steps when Kafur had Alp Khan assassinated when he was entering the palace.[3]

This assassination took place only a short time before the Sultan's death on Shawwal 7, 715/January 3, 1316. It appears therefore that Alp Khan left Gujarat for the capital by the middle of 715/ October-November 1315 and was killed in Ramzan 715 /December 1315.

[1] TFS 368-9; FS 329: 6317—332:6324. *Ashiqa* 235.
[2] FS 329:6328—331:6362. [3] FS 331:6363—332:6384.

Chapter V

DEVAL DEVI: TRUTH AND FICTION

Gupta's criticism of Khusrau—Modi and Kanungo — Munshi — Baini Prasad — A. K. Majumdar — Shrivastava and R. C. Majumdar—Khusrau's "anti-Indianism" — Kanwala devi: historicity of — Deval devi: historicity of—Fact of "Second" Invasion—Khusrau's Mathnawi: *historicity of—The Age problem: conclusion*

THE KANWALA DEVI and Deval devi incidents loom large in the historiography of the early Muslim rule in Gujarat. In recent years, the very *existence* of these figures has been questioned. It is therefore necessary to go deep into the opinions and the evidence on which this controversy has been based.

The first writer to question seriously the veracity of Amir Khusrau and the historicity of his famous *mathnawi*, was Jaganlal Gupta.[1] Gupta felt that, in this poem, Khusrau had made a deliberate and well-considered attempt at exalting Muslim culture at the expense of the Hindu; like his other ventures for instance, holding fairs and initiating new musical trends, it was a planned attempt to subvert Hindu culture by overlaying it with an Islamic veneer.

Gupta therefore subsumed that Khusrau was anti-Hindu and was deliberately distorting and fabricating facts for an ulterior purpose. His poetic genius secured for his works—especially for this *mathnawi*—a reputation of being historically true. A myth therefore came into existence, an untruth which was repeated by later writers like Firishtah and Bada-u'ni.

Gupta proceeds to describe the framework of the *mathnawi* and the contradictions which inhere in it. Thus:

1. The fact of second invasion is wrong. Ulugh Khan, said to be one of the leaders of the second invasion, had died earlier and Ramdeo of Deogir was attacked not because he had harboured Raja Karna but because he had ceased remitting tribute.

[1] Gupta, Jaganlal, "Deval Devi and Khizr Khan" (Hindi). *Nagari Pracharini Patrika*, Banaras, 1887/1933: Vol. XI. pp. 407-39. In this and subsequent sections, I have only summarised the arguments put forward by the different writers. Hence, no additional footnotes have generally been given.

2. Khusrau writes that Karna was willing to give his daughter to a *mlecchha* but both Firishtah and Ghaffari state that he would not marry her even to a Maratha. No support in the chronicles is found for this utterly un-Hindu behaviour of Raja Karna; nor is it proved that he was attacked for this.

3. Khusrau writes that Deval Devi was married to Khizr Khan while his own father was married to her mother. To Khusrau, a *sufi*, this may not appear strange but nothing would have been more foul for Kanwala devi, born and bred in the Aryan tradition.

4. Firishtah and Ghaffari attempt to camouflage Khusrau's lapses and attempt to provide an imaginary cause for the second invasion by saying that Karna refused to hand over his daughter to Malik Kafur.

5. Even if the fact of second invasion be accepted, the love story is contradicted by other factors: (*i*) Internal evidence in Barni and Khusrau points to Deval devi being eight years old when she was brought to Delhi in AH 704. This was the period of Mongol invasions and no leisure could have been available to the Sultan for undertaking a distant campaign for such a trivial reason. The invasion was in fact part of a larger campaign, led by Malik Kafur, in AH 708, when Deval devi would have been eleven years old. Firishtah and Ghaffari alter the year of invasion to 706 because if they write 708, the very birth of Deval devi would have been impossible in Karna's household, i.e., she would have been born after her mother had left Gujarat. (*ii*) If according to Firishtah, Deval devi was six years old when brought to Delhi, then the invasion should have taken place in 703; but this was the year when 'Ala-u'd-din was fighting in Chittor and Ranthambhor and his generals were engaged in Malwa. (*iii*) If six-year old Deval devi was brought to Delhi in 708, the year in which Kafur is accepted to have led his Southern campaign, then she would have been born in 702—five years after her mother's arrival in the capital. (*iv*) Even if the six-year fiction is accepted, the chronology of later events is not sustained. Khizr Khan is in fact indicated to be younger than Deval devi. (*v*) Deval devi had no brother as mentioned in the *mathnawi*. (*vi*) Finally, the unnatural assumption of the author that children of eight or ten can make passionate love stultifies the entire theme. Moreover, it is impossible that a child, snatched from her father would so quickly become at home in her enemy's household that

she would begin to exchange letters and make love in the elaborate poetic fashion.

Gupta therefore concludes that no such girl as Deval devi ever reached Delhi; and the arrival of her mother even is highly doubtful.

The name, Deval devi, was in fact to be found in Hindi and Sanskrit texts dealing with Ranthambhor in which Deval devi or Deval rani is said to be the name of Rana Hammir's daughter. It is given both in *Hammir Raso* and *Hammir Mahakavya*.[1] Khusrau therefore wrote this *mathnawi* to assuage his master's jealous rage in failing to secure Hammir's daughter and substituted the parentage to disgrace the vanquished ruler of Gujarat.

Gupta's arguments found favour with other writers. Modi quoted them with approval and Munshi reproduced them in commenting on the same topic; both reached the same conclusion.[2]

In 1939, Kanungo writing on the same theme, came to the same conclusion.[3] In adding to earlier arguments, he stressed the lack of corroboration from which the story suffered; it is not mentioned even in other works of Khusrau himself like *Khaza'in-u'l-futuh* and *Nuh Sipihr*. No contemporary writer like Barni or later ones like Yahya bin Sarhindi and Nizam-u'd-din refer to Kanwala devi. In the latter author's work she is mentioned but the grammatical construction suggests her name to have been a copyist's interpolation.

Later writers like Firishtah, Bada-u'ni and 'Ali Muhammad, who repeat the story, borrow it unthinkingly from Khusrau. Khusrau was a poet whose main aim was to weave a romance. In fact, the theme itself had no foundations; a misreading and mistranslation in Elliot had given currency to the belief that Khizr Khan had supplied an account of his love affair to Khusrau.

With the revision of Munshi's work, *The Glory that was Gurjaradesh*, interest in the problem revived. The Bhavan edition of the work contained two appendices on the subject, one by Munshi himself

[1] These works have been quoted in relation to the Rajputs before.

[2] R. R. Ramlal Chunilal Modi, "Was Karna Vaghela evilly disposed?" (Gujarati), *Gujarati Dipotsavi number*, October 15, 1933, pp. 15-7; K. M. Munshi, *Glory that was Gurjaradesh*, Bombay, 1944, Part III, pp. 225-6.

[3] K. R. Kanungo, "The historicity of the Romance, Deval devi and Khizr Khan," *PIHC 1939 (Calcutta) Session*, pp. 877-9.

and the other by Baini Prasad. Further it elicited a paper from A. L. Shrivastava.[1]

Munshi began with an analysis of the *mathnawi* and its version of two invasions of Gujarat. The *Ashiqa* was admittedly a romance, woven round his past patron when the poet was old and they were no more. Khusrau himself was not above time-serving; in *Nuh Sipihr* he is all praise for Mubarak Shah though after his death he calls him a "wretch". Thus the poet was not incapable of fabricating a romance which sounded authentic—if it suited his purpose.

On closer scrutiny too, the *Ashiqa* is discovered to be a pure romance. Barni does not refer to any particular woman being captured; Padmanabha reports Karna's queen to have fled on foot. Nizam-u'd-din includes Deval devi's name in *these* women. Even the name Kanwala devi appears to be a figment of Khusrau's mind.

Moreover, the incidents of Deval devi's capture, as given in the *Ashiqa* are clearly irrelevant to the second attack; they could have taken place only during the first invasion. In reality, no second invasion took place. How could a baby of five or six months escape when the whole of Karna's household had fallen into the invader's hands? The offer of marriage is patently absurd, suggested by a Delhi poet without any understanding of the outlook of a contemporary Hindu king. And if Karna had accepted, what was the necessity of attack?

Even in the parity of age, the two ages, those of Khizr Khan and Deval devi, disagree. If in 1306, Deval was eight and Khizr ten, then Khizr was six years old in 1302, when appointed to Chittor, fifteen in 1311 when he fell in love with Deval and composed a Hindi poem, intrigued against his father while he was between fifteen and eighteen—and had a son ten years old in 1318, when killed by his brother.

Finally, the *Ashiqa* is wrong when it says that Deval devi was with Khizr Khan in his last moments. Ibn Battutah who had his facts from the Kazi of the fort says that only his mother was with him. Moreover, Ibn Battutah makes no mention of the entire love affair, which he certainly would have made had it been true, for he was alive to anything sensational.

[1] K. M. Munshi, *Glory that was Gurjaradesh*, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1955, Appendix VIII. pp. 431-44; Appendix IX, pp. 444-54; A. L. Shrivastava, 'Historicity of Deval Rani Khizr Khan', *Agra College History & Political Science Journal*, 1955-6, pp. 1-8.

Arguments for the truthfulness of the *mathnawi* are unconvincing. Lack of support does not necessarily imply non-existence; but positive and independent corroboration of its historicity which must be produced if the "*Ashiqa* is to be challenged as a piece of invention" is not forthcoming. To say that later writers like Nizam-u'd-din might have found these incidents in the *Fathnama* is to accept that they did not find it in the *Ashiqa*. Even if certain incidents are corroborated, it does not follow that the entire *mathnawi* is so proved. Nor is it correct to say that the *Ashiqa* being a contemporary work incorporating names of living prince and princesses, could not be a romance; even if it was written in 1318, no evidence indicates that it was published before the advent of the Tughuluqs.

This appendix is followed by another by late Baini Prasad.[1] Dismissing a like question on the authenticity of Jayasi's work *Padmavat* on the authority of K. S. Lal, Baini Prasad examines the veracity of the *mathnawi* and concludes against its being historically true. Firishtah followed Khusrau too literally and his amendments thereto were his own creations; later writers have followed Khusrau or Firishtah or both. Isami's *Futuh-u's-salatin* is nothing more than abridgement of the *Ashiqa*. The only contemporary evidence is either of Barni or Khusrau, the former of which is silent and the latter weaves a romance. Neither Haji-u'd-dabir nor Ibn Battutah supports the facts of the *mathnawi* including the fact of the second invasion.

The *mathnawi* is therefore based on a single incident— the first and only invasion of Gujarat and the capture of several women of the royal household. It is therefore on par with Jayasi's *Padmavat*, a brilliant literary work without any historical significance.

In his work on the Chalukyas of Gujarat, A. K. Majumdar dealt briefly with this problem, sketching the versions given by Khusrau, Isami and Firishtah.[2] He felt that the total rejection of Amir Khusrau's story was to take an extreme view. But the omission of Kanwala devi's name from the gossipy narrative of Bada-u'ni was significant for even he could not credit 'the absurd story of a lecherous woman asking her paramour to snatch her daughter from her natural guardian into a life of infamy'.[2] Even Firishtah could not believe it. 'Amir Khusrau,' Majumdar writes, 'seems

[1] Baini Prasad, *op. cit.*

[2] A. K. Majumdar, *Chaulukyas of Gujarat*, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1956, pp. 189-96.

to have been suffering from a delusion that the Hindus had no sense of honour and their women no sense of chastity.'

The Kanwala devi's story is therefore false; she might have existed but surely she did not willingly share 'Ala-u'd-din's bed. 'The same is true of Deval devi.' She might have married Khizr Khan; 'but to assume that she fell in love with the son of her father's worst enemy would be calumniating her memory.'

Writers like Wolseley Haig, Mirza, Habib and Lal who on the whole accepted the story as basically true, did not go critically into it. In fact, they did not doubt the essential veracity of Amir Khusrau's story and hence for them the question of verification did not arise. It was to Shrivastava, alive to the problem, that the task of rehabilitating Khusrau fell.

Shrivastava added some more arguments against accepting the story as true. Neither Wassaf nor Ibn Battutah breathe a word of this affair; Ulugh Khan's death prior to the alleged second invasion, renders it highly improbable. It is inconceivable that Kanwala devi would have voluntarily invited her daughter to share her life or that Karna would have surrendered her. And in 1308, Deogir was ruled by Ramchandradeo and not Shankardeo. The ages of Deval and Khizr are anomalous; and no girl could have been precocious enough to admit adult love at the age of eight.

Yet, to reject Khusrau's work would be unscientific. Khusrau was not a poet only but a first-class historian, being the author of the only prose work of 'Ala-u'd-din's age. Wassaf's work is Central Asian history and Ibn Battutah's rambling memoirs are hardly works of history. Later writers of the calibre of Nizam-u'd-din, Firishtah and Bada-u'ni cannot be easily brushed aside; they might have taken their accounts from *Fathnama*. And a near contemporary, Isami, fully supports the version given by Khusrau.

Unimpeachable Hindu sources like Jina-prabha Suri in *Vividh-tirth Kalpa* and Padmanabha in *Kanhad-de Prabandh*, besides bardic traditions in *Rasmala*, record the flight of Karna's queen, implying thereby that she was captured.

Internal contradictions do not completely refute the story. The fact of the second invasion is incorrect but Khusrau might have construed an attack on Baglana to mean an invasion of Gujarat. The names might have been interchanged; the poet might have manipulated the ages to add flavour to the story.

In fact, the story is absolutely contemporary; the poet added 319 lines after Khĭzr Khan's death to add finishing touches to it, bringing it up-to-date. Not a single character in it is fictitious; many dates are correct and so are a number of incidents related. And hence, Shrivastava concludes, there is little in the basic theme of the *Ashiqa* which can be said to be impossible.[1]

Finally, R. C. Majumdar, writing on 'Ala-u'd-din Khalji, felt uncertain of the historicity of these two figures. Even if they existed, it was wrong he felt, to attribute romantic love on the part of the captive maiden towards those who held her.[2]

Gupta subsumed that Khusrau was anti-Hindu and was trying to denigrate Hindu culture, a fact which is easier to assume than to prove. If Khusrau was sincere in this purpose, he could hardly have struck at a spot at which his subjects were most sensitive, and even if he were naive enough to do so, he could not certainly have chosen a medium of which they were ignorant, namely, Persian.

Khusrau belonged to a class which in his age, was the ruling oligarchy dominating north India by force of arms. It gloried in its triumph and as its faith was to it, its charter of superiority over the conquered people, it spared no occasion to exalt it, to paint it in its most vivid hues. Yet though deeply conscious of its superiority, it felt no deep seated antagonism towards the vanquished; nor did it feel an urge to induct them into their own religion and society. The messianic urge, truly felt by the *sufi* savants, was in their case more formal than real, more political than social, more ritualistic than religious.

In many ways, however, Khusrau was an exception; he had become 'naturalised' to the land of his birth though a member of the foreign aristocracy. In the *Ashiqa*, not to say of *Nuh Sipihr* and his other works, eloquent passages recounting the beauties of Hind and its superiority over other lands like Khurasan, Syria and Turkey, occur all too frequently. In the *Ashiqa*, he ends with an appeal to his readers not to regard his harangue as a patriot's partiality—for if this land had not been superior to the rest, how

[1] Shrivastava, *op. cit.*

[2] R. C. Majumdar, General Editor, *The Delhi Sultanat*, Bombay, Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan, 1960, pp. 36-7.

could Adam and Eve journeyed to it after their expulsion?[1]

To this deep attachment, Khusrau added a love of the language of the people, Hindwi, which in his days was unalloyed with Persian words. To say that a poet of this calibre, with a deep regard and understanding of the Indian people and their culture, was either anti-Hindu or a stealthy saboteur of their culture, is surely more than unjust.

Equally unjust is the allegation that Khusrau wrote this *mathnawi* to assuage the jealous rage of his patron and substituted the parents' names to disgrace Raja Karna.

The identification of Hammir's daughter with Deval of Gujarat is based on the two works, which have been cited earlier. Both are semi-legendary accounts written centuries after the event had taken place. In them moreover, Hammir's daughter is mentioned only in the passage where 'Ala-u'd-din's envoy demands her from Hammir and is refused. In fact, there is nothing to suggest that she did *not* fall in the hands of the Turks—not unusual even after *jauhar*, as for instance in the case of the fall of Raisin to Sher Shah in 1542.

Moreover, the *mathnawi* contains elements which could have been unpleasant to the Khaljis. In Munshi's opinion the *mathnawi* could not have been written in the days of the Khaljis, or at least not openly circulated. It is surely strange for a poet to write a laudatory poem about his patron which he could not dare to publish in his lifetime!

Finally, nothing goes against the possibility of there being two Devals; to say that either one or none existed, and on that slender foundation, to refute a contemporary writer of not insignificant worth, is surely unhistorical.

It is evident therefore that Khusrau was not moved by malicious motives nor was he catering to the vanity of a vindictive Sultan alone, when he wrote this *mathnawi*. The historicity of the theme itself can, with this background, be investigated. Was there a Kamala (more correctly Kanwala) devi and/or Deval devi, or are both these characters fictitious?

[1] For a brief enumeration of the praises showered on Hindustan by Khusrau, see the Introduction to the *mathnawi*: 'Dewalrani-Khizr Khan (*Ashiqa*) of Amir Khusrau, edited with an Introduction by Rashid Ahmad Ansari, Aligarh, 1917, pp. 99-110.

It is true that no Rajput chronicles of that age mention Kanwala devi by name, with the important exception of bardic accounts as they were made known to Forbes. The *Rasmala* version leaves no doubt that in this respect, Forbes was not depending on Persian sources, as he does in the case of Deval devi, but recording the evidence as given to him by bards.[1]

Since bards would have their information from sources independent of those drawn upon by Khusrau, the poet evidently was not the creator of Kanwala devi. Bardic evidence suggests that she was his legal wife and her capture was in fact a retribution brought upon Karna for his seizure of his minister's wife.

This fact, moreover, is suggested by, as Shrivastava has mentioned, Jina-prabha Suri in *Vividh-tirth Kalpa* and Padmanabha in *Kanhad-de Prabandh*, who while they do not mention Kanwala devi by name, do say that she escaped on foot from the capital. A later Rajput *khyat* also repeats the same story.[2]

For Deval devi, it is undoubtedly true that most of our information regarding her can be traced either directly or indirectly to Amir Khusrau, with the important *exception* of Isami, whose account is analysed below. It is highly doubtful that Kabir-u'd-din's serious saga of the conquests of 'Ala-u'd-din would have contained this romantic interlude; more probably, like Khusrau in *Khaza'in-u'l-futuh*, he also would have considered it unworthy of being included in a serious book.

Isami, unlike other writers like Bada-u'ni, does not refer to Khusrau by name. Nor does he mention Kanwala devi, either during his account of the first invasion or later.[3] He also omits the byplay to which Khusrau ascribes the second attack of Gujarat; according to him, it was a simple expedition for driving out Raja Karna from Gujarat undertaken after the Mongol danger was no more.[4] Had Isami borrowed from Khusrau, he could not have left out these vital details.

It was during this expedition that Deval, young and accomplished, fell into Malik Ahmad's hands and was escorted to Delhi at the Emperor's orders. Even here there is no mention of her mother.[5]

In a subsequent section, Isami takes up the love story which

[1] *Rasmala* I. 265-6. [2] *Muhnot Nainsi ki khyat*, p. 213.
[3] FS 242:4679—244:4764 and 277:5354—281:5409.
[4] FS 277-8. [5] FS 278:5367-73.

appears to have passed into a much-embellished legend by his time. Khizr Khan fell in love with the beautiful princess and exhibited all the symptoms, minutely recounted in Persian verse, of the disease. Alp Khan, his uncle, was called from Gujarat and amidst glittering ceremonies, recounted fully by Isami as also by his predecessor, Khizr Khan was married to his uncle's daughter.

Khizr Khan suffered this in silence but his malady took a turn for the worse. At last, he told his woe to his mother in the shape of a story of Laila and Majnu, and so affected was she by the tale that the very next day, his Laila was given to him. Isami writes that the tale was a celebrated one in his age and completes it with a prayer to the Almighty to favour all lovers with His help.[1]

In a later section, Isami describes the confinement of Khizr Khan in the fort of Gwalior, Deval devi being with him. He does not recount the last incidents given in the *Ashiqa*, namely the assassination of the Prince.

Evidently, as he writes, Isami is building on a theme which had become celebrated by his time, not copying or plagiarising from the work of his predecessor. His tenor, his narrative and the details given by him are so different as to preclude any such possibility.[2] In the end, he also mentions the last resting place of Raja Karna, a fact given by no other chronicler.

With her existence testified by Khusrau *and* Isami, Deval becomes a live figure. Her existence no longer needs the benefit of doubt so long accorded to it. But do Khusrau and Isami err in stating that there were *two* invasions of Gujarat?

Zia Barni cast a spell on his fellow writers, both near and distant, which they found difficult to break—a condition which may have been due to the lack of alternative sources. Whether Nizam-u'd-din and Firishtah utilised Kabir-u'd-din's work or not, is doubtful; what is very nearly certain, is that they reproduce Barni's version with only minor changes, part of which is taken from Khusrau's

[1] FS 314:6051—325:6250.

[2] Thus the way in which Khizr Khan affliction was conveyed to his mother is different in both: in the *Ashiqa*, she is reported to have been adjured by a confidante, in the *Futuhat*, by Khizr Khan himself. Vide fn. 1 above and *Ashiqa*, 57-9.

writings. And Barni, as Habib remarked, was none too good at military history.[1]

Of all the later writers, only Firishtah sought to improve on him. To this perspicacious sixteenth century writer the difference between Barni's terse account and Khusrau's versified narrative appeared puzzling, and therefore he combined both, giving rise to another legend. He thought it impossible for Karna to have stayed in Patan after Ulugh Khan's devastating holocaust, and yet Khusrau had said so. Firishtah therefore concluded that both Barni and Khusrau were right; the attack on Karna had taken place but it was on Karna in the outskirts of Gujarat, not in its capital.

Where Firishtah secured this bit of information, that Karna fled to Baglana after the fall of Patan, is uncertain. He cites Ahmad Ghaffari's *Nuskha-i-Jahanara* but a close reading of the passage in question reveals that this work is quoted to prove the date of Malik Kafur's Deccan campaign and to indicate the strength of the army he took with him there and not to borrow information pertaining to Raja Karna.[2] Moreover, the only work of this name by this author is a general history of the world, written in Persian in the reign of Shah Tahmasp in AH 972, scarcely half a century before Firishtah himself wrote.[3] The entire Khalji age occupies barely two pages of this history; and of what use it could have been in clearing obscure points during this period, can be gauged from this alone.

Both Khusrau and Isami vouch for Karna's return to his devastated capital after the holocaust was over.[4] No Rajput or Jain source indicates his subsequent career except saying contemptuously that he died a fugitive in foreign lands.[5] It is difficult therefore to disbelieve their statements of Karna's return after the *first* invasion and his subsequent and final expulsion after the second.

Moreover, the Persian writers do not speak of the direct occupation of Gujarat after the 1299 campaign but say that the Turkish

[1] "Barni who was essentially a man of civil life, allowed Kabir-u'd-din to speak of Alauddin's conquests and confined his own history to an account of administrative and political affairs, merely adding a paragraph on the campaigns here and there for the logical completeness of his work". *Hazrat Amir Khusrau of Delhi*, by Muhammad Habib, Bombay, Taraporewala & Sons, 1927, p. 101.

[2] TF I. 116-7.

[3] Rieu, *Catalogue of Persian MSS. in the British Museum*, Vol. I. 111/b.

[4] FS as per fn. 1 above: *Ashiqa* 64 & 70-9.

[5] NNP III. 10-18.

army returned to the capital. Even Barni speaks of an *interregnum* between the attack on Gujarat and the appointment of Alp Khan. And who ruled Gujarat during this period?[1]

A Jain source, *Vichar-sreni* of Merutunga, gives the year of the invasion of Gujarat as VS 1360/1303, a fact which has led Muni Jinavijayaji to conclude that this must refer to the appointment of Alp Khan to Gujarat.[2] This date agrees with the one given by Isami for the 'Second' invasion, which he writes, took place shortly after Taghi's raid on India—an event which occurred in 1303.[3]

Isami is definite in indicating the name of the general who led the expedition, viz. Malik Ahmad. It was an independent task, not a part of the Deccan campaign, as mentioned by Firishtah. Moreover, Ramdeo of Deogir was not charged with harbouring Karna for the simple reason that he did not harbour Karna. From his court, the fugitive Waghela king had to direct his weary steps to Laddar Deo of Telang, where at last he could lay his weary head.[4]

This Laddar Deo of Isami was in fact Raja Pratap Rudra Deo of Warangal who was subsequently attacked by Malik Kafur and saved himself by paying a huge ransom.[5]

It will thus be seen that Khusrau was not wrong when he spoke of a 'second' attack. It did take place and it was during this attack that the Waghela princess, Dewal Rani fell into the hands of the Turks.

The basic facts of the *Ashiqa* are therefore true; but can the same be said for secondary ones?

The *Ashiqa* is one of the five historical poems written by the poet, and the only one for the reign of 'Ala-u'd-din. Each of these *mathnawis* contains historical matter of undoubted value; in the *Ashiqa* too there are sections which go into the previous history of the Sultanate and the conquests of 'Ala-u'd-din as a prince and as a ruler.[6] In the subsequent *mathnawi*, *Nuh Sipihr*, the story was continued for the reign of Mubarak Shah. Lastly, the *Tughuluq Namah*, the last creation of the poet, told the tale of the fall of the Khalji house and the accession of the Tughluqs.

It is difficult therefore to believe that in a work of this type, Khusrau would either be scandal-mongering or narrating a story

[1] TFS 252. [2] *Purattatva* IV. 268. [3] Lal 163: FS 277:5354.
[4] FS 278:5363-5. [5] Lal, *op. cit.*, 182. [6] *Ashiqa*, 46-75.

which stands contradicted by facts. On the other hand, he would be careful with his material; and this he is, for in the very beginning of his work, he cites the source of his information.[1] Most of the facts given in the *mathnawi* are vouched for by other authorities too : for instance, the conquests of 'Ala-u'd-din; the estranged relations between the Sultan and his family and the influence of Malik Kafur on him; the imprisonment and blinding of Khizr Khan; the brief tenure of Malik Kafur as Protector and the accession of Mubarak Shah; the assassination of Khizr Khan in the fort of Gwalior; and finally the existence of Kanwala devi and Deval devi.

The rejection of Khusrau's authority for a fact, therefore, only on inferential grounds, would be unhistorical. Unless there is proof to the contrary or strong reasons against it, a fact attested by Khusrau can not be set aside lightly.

The first queries that come to the mind are: Did Kanwala devi ask 'Ala-u'd-din to send for her daughter? Did the Sultan ask for her in marriage for his son from Raja Karna? Did Raja Karna accept it?

This version of the facts is given only by Khusrau. Isami and Firishtah are silent on this point. It is quite possible for the poet to have been misinformed at least regarding the conversation Kanwala devi had with the Sultan in the privacy of the bed-chamber. Or the same could be true, namely that the Sultan wished for a bride for his son and having heard of the daughter of his favourite wife and even without having had this request from her, desired her as a bride for his heir-apparent.

It is totally erroneous to reject this story on an assertion that it is an "absurd story of a lecherous woman asking her paramour to snatch her daughter from her natural guardian into a life of infamy"; and in writing it, "Amir Khusrau seems to have been suffering from a delusion that the Hindus had no sense of honour and their women no sense of chastity."[2]

About Amir Khusrau, the analysis of his work is sufficient to absolve him of any such sweeping judgment. Moreover, nowhere in the *mathnawi* in question has he breathed even a word of disparagement regarding either Kanwala devi or her daughter. On the other hand they have been extolled as possessing excellent

[1] *Ibid.*, 10-13. [2] A. K. Majumdar, *op. cit.*, 195.

and exemplary qualities. Thus, if he states these facts, true or otherwise, it is without any ulterior purpose and with none of the ignorance or maliciousness attributed to him.

The slur on Kanwala devi is totally unwarranted. If she had the misfortune to be captured, it was due to the failure of her former protectors. Unlike the practice of the Rajputs, at least in medieval age, the fall of Patan was not marked by a *jauhar*; at least, none of the chroniclers, Rajput, Muslim or Jain, mention it. And once in the Turkish capital, if she accepted the ways of her captors, she could hardly be blamed for it.

Moreover, she does not appear to have been treated in any way unbecoming to her. She was taken to Delhi without any harm and there espoused by the Sultan himself. This was a treatment, distinctly superior to that meted out to numerous unfortunate maidens captured in these battles, who were handed over to the nobles and often trained as dancing girls, if not worse. That was real disgrace and medieval history is full of it. Rajputs too acted in similar fashion. Bahadur Shah encountered the daughter of the Kazi of Ahmadnagar as a dancing girl in Chittor and the harems of both Silhadi and Puranmal of Malwa contained Muslim women.

In Rajput memory too, Kanwala devi did not appear as a "fallen woman". Her capture was interpreted as divine vengeance for Karna's truly criminal conduct towards his Brahmin minister. If this story be taken as true—and there does not seem ground enough to reject it—it would seem that Kanwala devi had reason to be bitter against her Rajput lord, firstly for slighting her and then failing to protect her, when Nemesis overtook him. It is not impossible that these excruciating experiences turned her former affection into venom, and she made her request to the Sultan to compel the author of her anguish to suffer as she had suffered.

Even then, it is by no means proved that Kanwala devi requested 'Ala-u'd-din in this way. But, did the Sultan in fact ask Raja Karna for his daughter in marriage for his son, and was this demand refused by Raja Karna?

It is quite possible that the demand was made by 'Ala-u'd-din and entertained by Raja Karna, if not with a welcome, at least without overt manifestations of disrespect. Karna was no hero and his shattered kingdom in no shape to admit vainglorious assertions of fictitious strength. If not anything else, the sheer necessity to gain time would have compelled Karna to temporise

rather than risk an outright refusal—the course adopted by the Rajput lord of Matar in a similar situation.[1] That Karna had some such course in mind and that 'Ala-u'd-din had become suspicious, is indicated by the abrupt change of plans and the decision taken by the Sultan to expel Karna from Gujarat.

And, in this breathing spell which he had hoped to gain, the unfortunate ruler attempted to finalise an alliance which in better days he had scorned. But before his daughter could reach the promised asylum, she fell into the hands of her pursuers. Even without the romantic halo imparted by Khusrau's facile pen—and the details supplied by Firishtah—this version does not seem to be impossible.

The age question, which has been a major criticism of the *mathnawi*, may be taken up, as we conclude.

If Deval devi was six months old when in 699/1299, her mother was taken to Delhi, then in 704/1304-05, she would have been five or six years old. To Khizr Khan, she was married in about 813/1313, shortly after his splendid wedding with his uncle Alp Khan's daughter;[2] then she would have been about fourteen, an age when marriages were all too common. By then, she had been for nearly nine years in the Khalji capital, a period encompassing nearly two-thirds of her total life.

Firishtah writes that Deval devi was four years old in 697/1297, when the first invasion took place and twelve or thirteen, when in 706/1306, she came to Delhi.[3] She would be about twenty, therefore, when in 813/1313, she was married to Khizr Khan. It is not known how Firishtah obtained these facts; against Khusrau and by themselves, they do not appear to be very reliable.

Further Khusrau writes that when she reached Delhi, the first interview with Khizr Khan took place; he was then ten and she eight.[4] This is a discrepancy, certainly, but not a major one, for according to this reckoning, Deval must have been two or three at the time of the first invasion.

At no other place, except here is Khizr Khan's age mentioned. If he was ten in 705/1305-06, then he was about sixteen when he was wedded to his cousin and about eighteen at the time of his marriage to Deval in 713/1313. He was twenty-one in 716/1315-16,

[1] *Rasmala* I., 326. [2] *Ashiqa* 15 & 44-5; also 24.
[3] TF I. 216. [4] *Ashiqa* 29.

when he was blinded and imprisoned in Gwalior; and at the age of twenty-four, in 719/1319, he was killed by Mubarak Shah for refusing to surrender his wife.

Khizr Khan was the eldest and Mubarak Shah, the second of 'Ala-u'd-din's sons; the latter was about twenty when he came to the throne in 716/1316. There is nothing against this reckoning, as it is given by Amir Khusrau.

About the subsequent life of Deval devi : after her husband's death—whom she served faithfully till the end and was repaid by an affection rarely found in royal scions of that age—Deval devi was taken to Delhi. How she fared with Mubarak Shah, we do not know but the surmise may be said to be fairly obvious. Khusrau is totally silent about her afterwards; in the *Tughuluq-nama*, his last work, in which he describes the atrocities perpetrated by the Barwaris, especially on the royal family, Deval devi is not mentioned.

Of all the chroniclers, only Haji-u'd-dabir writes that she fell into the hands of Khusrau Khan.[1] It is not impossible. For the proud princess of Gujarat, that must have been the bitterest degradation she had experienced, though one wonders, which could have been worse to her, the vulgar Sultan with his crude appetites who killed his blinded elder brother to seize his wife or the successful *parvenue* who might have left her in peace.

It is intriguing to conjecture where Haji could have secured this information from, since all available contemporary chronicles are silent about it. Did he get it in the *Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi* of Husam Khan? Where did this author get his knowledge from? Was there another version of the story, lost now? It is difficult to refute Haji's statement which agrees with the probabilities of the situation, but puzzling to guess where his information could have come from.

[1] *Zafar-u'l-walih* II. 848.

Chapter VI

MUBARAK SHAH: THE BARWARIS AND THE RISE OF INTERNAL CONFLICTS

Rebellion in Gujarat—Its suppression—Hisam-u'd-din Barwari—Wahid-u'd-din Qureshi

THE SHORT reign of Mubarak Shah marked the ascendancy of people hailing from Gujarat, in the capital. In Gujarat itself, it witnessed a rapid change of governors, in an attempt to curb the disturbances which reflected in this region, the uncertain political forces of Delhi.

The disturbances which commenced in Gujarat with the displacement and assassination of Alp Khan continued right through the fleeting tenure of Malik Kafur and his child *protégé*, Shahab-u'd-din. Hyder and Zirak, two of the lieutenants of the murdered governor were the leaders of this insurrection which was caused by the indignation and anger roused by the foul act.[1] Nearly the whole of royal force in Gujarat appears to have joined the two leaders in their attempt to avenge the cruel wrong done to their erstwhile leader.[2]

The insurgents signalled their resolve by tearing a *farman* which had come to them from the capital and killing its bearer. On its receipt, this news was conveyed by Malik Kafur to his master; 'Ala-u'd-din was by now completely within his favourite's influence and, if we are to believe Isami, petulantly authorised him to take this worry off his mind. Malik Kafur thereupon sent Malik Dinar, *Shahnah-i-fil*, a totally undistinguished functionary, to quell the rebellion.[3]

While this expedition was on the border of Gujarat, it received the tidings of 'Ala-u'd-din's death. And on hearing it Dinar quietly abandoned his commission and returned with his force to Delhi.[4] Gujarat thus for all purposes, had virtually seceded from the Sultanate.

[1] FS 332:6386. [2] FS 332:6385-92. [3] FS 333:6396-9.

[4] FS 333:6401-2. Barni and later writers who follow him, write that this force was entrusted to Kamal-u'd-din Gurg, the general who had reduced Jalor. It was defeated by the rebels and its leader was killed (TFS 369; TA I. 183).

In Delhi, Malik Kafur was passing through a crisis and felt the necessity of calling Ain-u'l-mulk Multani from Deogir. On receipt of urgent summons, Ain-u'l-mulk left Deogir but without making up his mind regarding the course of action he should adopt in the capital. In the meanwhile, Kafur also appears to have become suspicious of this prominent and powerful noble and sent him another *farman*, asking him to proceed to Gujarat and crush the rebellion in that quarter.

On receipt of this order, Ain-u'l-mulk decided to wait on events rather than force them. He halted near Chittor and it was here that he received the news of Kafur's end and Mubarak Shah's accession. (Muharram 716/April-May 1316).[1]

Mubarak Shah was naturally anxious to win the support of this powerful noble and therefore asked another of the great *Alai* nobles, Malik Tughuluq to meet Ain-u'l-mulk and pursuade him to declare for him, and then proceed against the rebels in Gujarat.

Malik Tughuluq proceeded to Chittor and met Ain-u'l-mulk. The noble formally accepted the *farman* sent to him by the Sultan but in a confidential conclave, his advisers warned him against a premature committal. Apprised of this attitude, Malik Tughuluq returned to the capital and advised Mubarak Shah to assert himself by something more substantial than mere accession, if he wished to secure the support of distant nobles. Probably, Malik Tughuluq had also become suspicious of Ain-u'l-mulk. Mubarak Shah immediately ordered preparations to be made on a march to Gujarat; an order was sent to Ain-u'l-mulk to advance as the vanguard of the royal army which was following him.[2]

For Ain-u'l-mulk, this was a warning as well as a command. It was also a sure indication that the new Sultan was no longer shaky on his throne and meant to implement his authority over his subordinates. The noble therefore marched towards Gujarat by about the middle of 716 September-October, 1316.

In Gujarat, the defiant regime of Hyder and Zirak was based

Isami's version, as reproduced in the text, appears more reliable. Isami had greater knowledge of the events which Barni treats sketchily and it also seems unlikely that a veteran *Alai* general would have succumbed so easily to relatively unknown rebel leaders.

[1] FS 340-1: 6521-37. Malik Kafur wrote to Ain-u'l-mulk that he had been appointed *muqtei'* of Gujarat.

[2] FS 347-9:6664-705.

on the indignation felt by Alp Khan's followers at his dastardly assassination. The rebels seemed to have gained considerable strength, for the attacking force showed no alacrity in forcing the issue.

Ain-u'l-mulk advanced from Chittor to Patan and on hearing of his approach, the two insurgent leaders led their forces outside the city. But before the engagement could take place, Ain-u'l-mulk sent letters full of 'guile and trickery' to the lieutenants of these two leaders.[1]

In these communications, Ain-u'l-mulk emphasised the futility of the rebellion when its object had been achieved by the punishment of those who had been guilty of the assassination of Alp Khan. Further, he said, that the persistence of the insurgents in their attempt, would brand them as rebels and expose them to the fury of the royal army which had to date a record of invincibility. It was therefore incumbent on them to abandon Hyder and Zirak in their disloyal attempt and thus win the favour and goodwill of their Sultan.[2]

The argument had both logic and force for, with the punishment of Malik Kafur, the rebel cause had been vindicated, and persistence in the same had, it could not be denied, an element of personal ambition in it. The appeal therefore had its desired effect. The insurgent leaders were abandoned by most of their followers and had to take recourse to flight. Ain-u'l-mulk came out victorious after what does not seem to have been a very sharp engagement.[3]

Following his success, Ain-u'l-mulk undertook the task of reducing rebel pockets and restoring royal authority in the land. Having completed this task, he returned to the capital as the conqueror of Gujarat and was suitably honoured and rewarded by the Sultan.[4]

Nevertheless, Isami remarks with some surprise that Mubarak Shah gave Malik Dinar the title of Zafar Khan and appointed him as the governor of Gujarat, and thus the *Shahnah-i-fil* became a great noble.[5] Probably he did not know, as Barni did, that the Sultan had married Malik Dinar's daughter and had thus passed over his ignominious retreat from Gujarat.[6]

Malik Dinar—or to give him the benefit of his title, Zafar Khan—proved himself a capable administrator. Within a few months,

[1] FS 350:6713. [2] FS 350-1:6713-33. [3] FS 351: 6734-42.
[4] FS 352: 6743-8. [5] FS 353:6749-51. [6] TFS 388.

Barni writes, he had brought the country into order with such an excellent government, that people forgot the days of Alp Khan. The Rajputs were put down, revenue collection together with other dues collection, was regularised and speeded and while large sums were remitted to the capital, a balance sufficient to equip and maintain a large force, was left in the province.[1]

In spite of his good work, Zafar Khan did not stay long in Gujarat, in fact, only for about six months from Z'il-qa'da 716/January 1317 to Rabi-u'l-awwal 717/May-June 1317.[2] It was evidently the growing influence of the Barwari, Khusrau Khan, which made the young Sultan order the execution of his father-in-law. It seems that Khusrau Khan planned his native land to be his stronghold, and therefore wished it to be under his own immediate adherents. This incident therefore indicates that the Sultan had by then passed more or less completely under the influence of his favourite.

The Barwari phase in the capital was reflected in Gujarat by the rule of Husam-u'd-din, a kinsman of Khusrau Khan.[3] How he ruled, is virtually unknown. Barni and following him later writers are uniformly hostile to Khusrau and his men, but even they are unable to state that Husam-u'd-din was guilty of any overt act of rebellion, other than collecting his caste or clan fellows around himself. It was this building up of strength which was interpreted as a threat by the older Turkish oligarchy which made them seize him and send him in captivity to Delhi.

It is doubtful if Husam-u'd-din did attempt anything more. It is of course true, that Khusrau and his men planned the *coup*

[1] TFS 388.

[2] Barni writes that he was executed after the Sultan's return from Deogir, when his temper had taken a turn for the worse. (TFS 395). An inscription in Jalor, dated Muharram 5, 718/March 9, 1318, refers to Taj-u'l-mulk as the governor; hence by this time, both Zafar Khan and his successor had completed their terms. (*Epigraphica Indo-Moslemica* 1937-38, pp. 49-50). The sequence, judged from internal evidence, appears as follows: Ain-u'l-mulk Multani's campaign—middle 716/October-November 1316: appointment of Zafar Khan—Shawwal-Z'il-qa'da 716/December 1316-January 1317: Zafar Khan's tenure Z'il-qa'da 716/January 1317-Rabi I. 717/May-June 1317: Husam-u'd-din—Rabi II. 717/June-July 1317-beginning of 718/February 1318.

[3] Hodivala, 286 and 368-71: for other modern writers on Khusrau Khan and Barwari ascendancy, *see* A. L. Shrivastava, 'Origin of Nasir-u'd-din Khusrau Shah of Delhi' *Proceedings IHC XVI Session*, 173-4: Sri Ram Sharma, *Studies in Medieval Indian History*, Sholapur, 1956, pp. 103-20: Munshi II., 428-31 and 455-71.

long before they actually carried it out; yet their whole plan would have jeopardised by a false move by their nominee in Gujarat. It is very unlikely therefore that he attempted to rebel. Isami, who could have known better, does not say anything, which can mean that nothing untoward took place after the restoration of central authority by Ain-u'l-mulk Multani.

In fact, the Barwaris planned for the day when Khusrau's influence over the Sultan would wane, the day Mubarak Shah would become aware of the net around himself. Khusrau perceived this to be taking place when Husam-u'd-din's captors went unpunished and when Wahid-u'd-din Qureshi was summoned from Gujarat to be entrusted with the *wazarat*.[1]

It may be doubted, if the over-hasty act of the Turkish oligarchy in Gujarat, was only due to their sense of loyalty towards their distant sovereign, or if it was prompted by their resentment against the elevation of a base-born neo-convert and virtual Hindu, over their heads. The entire Barwari movement was a repudiation of the foreign aristocracy which had monopolised power since the inception of the Sultanate of Delhi. The deep antagonism, basically racial, which this proud aristocracy felt towards the intruders is indicated not only by their scandalised opposition to the Sultan's favourites in their brief spell of power but also by the obloquy with which they have covered their names.

For the Barwaris were not base-born; even Barni whose plentiful vocabulary ran short of epithets in dealing with them, did not call them that. It is nevertheless, difficult to know *who* exactly they were; Khusrau calls them *Barao*, Isami, *Parao* and Barni, *Barwari*.[2] There is no warrant for calling them *Bharwads* or shepherds. The only definite fact about them which can be said with some certainty, is that they belonged to a fairly large community which was not unwarlike.

The tenure of Husam-u'd-din in Gujarat appears to have been from Rabi II. 717/ June-July, 1317 to the beginning of 718/February 1318.

Syed Wahid-u'd-din Qureshi was evidently more acceptable to the Turkish oligarchy of Gujarat. His first task was to clear

[1] TFS 397: TA I. 180: GI I. 125-6: MT I. 211-2.

[2] Khusrau calls them a people noted for martial qualities. *Tughuluq-namah*, edited by Syed Hashmi Faridabadi, Aurangabad, 1933, p. 19, lines 338-40. TFS 388 & 397; FS 362:6919.

the land of the troublesome host assembled by his predecessor, an activity which won him the warm support of the local oligarchy.[1] Yet, after a brief tenure, he was called to the capital to be entrusted with the *wazarat*. By then he had received the title of Taj-u'l-mulk.[2]

No governor is reported to have replaced him in Gujarat. It seems likely therefore that he was allowed to retain his charge formally and rule it through a deputy. This course was made possible for him by the support of the Turkish oligarchy.

The growth of this class is a notable factor in the history of Gujarat during this age. To Alp Khan must go the credit for creating it. It had a spell of independence before A'in-u'l-mulk restored royal authority by separating them from their erstwhile leaders. Zafar Khan and Wahid-u'd-din Taj-u'l-mulk acted in conformity with their interests. Only Husam-u'd-din went against them and was sent to Delhi in chains. No wonder, Mubarak Shah punished him only by a slap; no ruler could appreciate an allegiance which was conditioned by his subjects' own terms.

The distance from the capital and the lack of support in Gujarat was responsible for this independence. After all, they were the people who lived in this land and held it against the Rajputs. The independence was justifiable; its implications were, however, dangerous. Muhammad bin Tughluq fought for his rights as sovereign, when for three years, he chased an elusive rebel in an out-of-the way part of Gujarat, and plunged the Sultanate in an irretrievable decline.

No information is available regarding conditions in Gujarat when one of her sons donned the robes of royalty as Khusrau Shah. No chronicler mentions Taj-u'l-mulk during the course of the negotiations which preceded the accession of Ghazi Malik as Tughluq Shah; nor is he mentioned in the new set up which emerged with the Tughluq dynasty. Either he had been killed by Khusrau Shah, a not unlikely possibility, or he lost favour with the new Sultan who set him aside and made his own appointments.

[1] TFS 398; GI I. 126.

[2] Jalor Inscription in *Epigraphica Indo-Moslemica* for 1937-38, pp. 49-50; FTS 398.

Chapter VII

MUHAMMAD BIN TUGHULUQ: THE ATTEMPT AT DOMINATION AND ITS FAILURE IN GUJARAT

Tughuluq Shah's Rule in Gujarat—Muhammad bin Tughuluq: the first phase—Kaulambi affair in Cambay—The Afghan rebellion: the beginning—The Rebels: their success—Defeat of Muqbil and Aziz Khimmar — Loyalist resentment in Cambay — Muhammad bin Tughuluq : his arrival in Gujarat—His measures—Taghi's rebellion—Muhammad bin Tughuluq: return from Daulatabad—Stay in Patan: attempt to subdue Saurashtra—Rajput contacts : Piram and Junagadh—Rajput acknowledgement —The Sultan in Saurashtra—Departure from Gujarat—Muhammad bin Tughuluq : death in Sind

THREE disconnected and chronologically unrelated incidents give a picture of the installation of Tughuluq rule in Gujarat.

The change-over does not appear to have been smooth if an incident narrated by Isami is indicative of the general run of affairs. Shadi, a Tughuluq officer was commissioned by Tughuluq Shah to go to Gujarat and put down the trouble makers in that area. Shadi proceeded to Gujarat and implemented his orders energetically. Ultimately, he came to besiege a strong fortress around which he had to spend two months. The 'Hindus' who had been encircled all this while tried a stratagem to free themselves of this blockade. A few of them managed to get outside by a fierce sortie; then taking the help of nearby villagers, they disguised themselves as *ahl-i-tarab*, i e. musicians and dancers, and presented themselves before the besiegers. The entertainment-starved soldiers welcomed these people and made much of them, and the news of their arrival reached the commander, Shadi. He summoned them before himself, and "as the advent of death had drawn a curtain before his eyes," he received them privately in his tent.

This was the opportunity for which the entertainers had plotted for and they exploited it by killing Shadi. In the commotion which followed, they escaped and brought another force to attack the

distracted besiegers. Their position therefore became untenable and the next day, the encircling force was compelled to raise the siege and retire towards the capital. Tughuluq Shah, says Isami, raged when he heard this news, but he does not say how he translated his feelings into action.[1]

It is clear that Isami gives this incident in detail not because of its historical importance, but because of its dramatic interest. That a party should disguise itself as musicians and fool an entire army by playing on its susceptibilities was sufficiently significant for Isami to accord a place for the event in his chronicle. Not so significant, however, was the question of place and time and for this reason it is difficult to place this isolated incident in correct or in any sequence with the piece-meal information given by other chroniclers.

For, the only information which Barni gives is that Tughuluq Shah appointed Taj-u'd-din Turk as the *naib* of Gujarat. The full title of this officer was Malik Taj-u'd-din Ja'far.[2] Firishtah and other later writers, who are mainly dependent on Barni for their information, are also no more communicative. It appears to be obvious that the new governor was despatched immediately after the Sultan's accession; but why the Sultan found it necessary to send Shadi from the capital is by no means clear. Lack of information precludes any discussion on this point.

The third and possibly the most significant piece of information is the bilingual inscription of Petlad dated VS 1380, 7th day of the dark fortnight of Pausha/Z'il-hujja 20, 723/December 20, 1323, Tuesday.[3] The inscription commemorates the construction of a well and the fixing of an allowance of 20 *kubhas* of land for this purpose.

The use of the old Sanskritic terminology in the Sanskritic version of the inscription is significant. In fact, so is the use of Sanskrit as an auxiliary language to Persian. It indicates that the culture and language of the incomers had not penetrated beyond the small group of people coming from the North. The language of the indigenous Muslims of Gujarat was Arabic, and almost no Hindu understood Persian, though it may be wondered how many understood Arabic either.

The use of Sanskrit was therefore necessary, all the more so

[1] FS 398-401: 7595-7648. [2] TFS 424 and 429.

[3] *Epigraphica Indo-Moslemica*, 1915-16, 16-18; Commissariat, *op. cit.*, 18-20.

because it contained an appeal to the "illustrious *thakurs*" to "protect these gifts". It indicates that the "victorious reign of the glorious Sultan" was dependent on the good-will of the *thakurs* in the interior countryside, and even a few miles away from Cambay, the strong-hold of Muslim rule in Gujarat, it had to request rather than demand compliance to its orders and grants.

The Arabic influence in coastal Gujarat is reflected in the name of the builder, Haji Isma'il Uthman of Shiraz, a native of Cambay. As the earlier inscriptions in Petlad testify, Gujarat received its early Muslim influence through the sea; and such influence was peaceful and social, not violent and political as the impact from the North was.

The reign of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq marks at once the climax and the decline of the Sultanate. This is equally true for Gujarat as well. Muhammad bin Tughuluq was not only the first Delhi Sultan to visit this region but his reign signifies the initiation of architectural constructions which bespeak of the degree of stability which Muslim rule had achieved in this land. Yet little is known of the first and constructive phase of this Sultan's rule in Gujarat; the details which have come down to us refer to the later and the sorrier part of his tenure.

Except the Adina *masjid* built by Alp Khan in Patan—which unfortunately no longer exists—Muslim architecture in Gujarat starts with the Jami *masjid* in Cambay in 1325 (Muharram 18, 725/ January 4, 1325). It was followed by the Idgah built in Broach next year (Rabi. I. 25, 726/March 1, 1326).[1] The main feature which distinguishes the construction of these two religious edifices is that, unlike most monuments of this period, these were built without official encouragement but with support from a prosperous Arab merchant prince, Muhammad Butamari, who was entitled Malik-u's-Sharq Fakhr-u'd-daulah wa-u'd-din. Even without the testimony of Ibn Battutah, this fact would have been enough to prove the wealth and influence of these foreign merchants of Gujarat.[2]

[1] J. Burgess, *Muhammadan Architecture of Bharoch, Cambay*, etc., p. 28. Burgess and Cousins, *Revised Lists*, 313-14 and 320. Commissariat, 64-69; Burgess, *Muhammadan Architecture of Gujarat*, p. 20 ff. *Bombay Gazetteer* II Surat & Broach) 556 n.

[2] *Rehla*, 172-3.

Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq marked his accession to the throne by effecting an alteration in the administrative pattern of the province which had become autonomous to the extent of sometimes being independent of central authority. By these changes, he hoped to break the power of the governor and keep the provincial authority more subject to his control.

The command of the army in Gujarat was placed in the hands of Malikzadah Ahmad bin Aiyyaz[1] while the administration of finance and revenue was entrusted to Malik Muqbil.[2] Two other *jagirs* were granted directly from the centre : Muhammad Khan, the eldest son of the Emperor's preceptor Qutlugh Khan was given a *iqta'a* in Gujarat while another officer Malik Shahab-u'd-din was appointed to Navasari. All officers were promoted to Khanhood. Malik Ahmad became Khwajah Jahan, Malik Muqbil, Khan Jahan, Muhammad Khan received the title of Alp Khan while Shahab-u'd-din became Iftikhar Khan.[3]

[1] Malik Ahmad bin Aiyyaz later became the *wazir-i-mumalik* of Muhammad bin Tughuluq. Ibn Battutah suggests that this favour was due to Malik Ahmad's complicity in Sultan Ghayath-u'd-din's death. (*Rehla*, 54). Isami writes that Malik Ahmad attracted Sultan Ghayath-u'd-din's attention when he waited on him and surrendered the fort held by his father, immediately after the Sultan's victory over Khusrau Shah (FS 479). For more references regarding this minister who had the unique privilege of enjoying Sultan Muhammad's confidence throughout his life, see Mahdi Husain's footnote to the *Rehla* of Ibn Battutah, p. 54.

[2] Malik Muqbil held this post until the rebellions began in Gujarat when he was replaced by Shaikh Mu'iz-u'd-din. It appears that he replaced Malik Ahmad bin Aiyyaz after the latter's departure from Gujarat. He is mentioned repeatedly by Barni, Isami and Ibn Battutah. Vide, *infra* 99.

[3] TFS 454-5; TMS 99-100; Firishtah I, 133-4. MT I. 226.

Barni in his list of officers, mentions Sheikhzada Mu'iz-u'd-din as *naib-i-Gujarat* and Malik Sharf-u'd-mulk as *wali-i-Gujarat*. He also refers to Nizam-u'l-mulk Juna Bahadur Turk as *naib-i-Gujarat*; but he does not write when these appointments were made. As the appointment of Sheikhzada Mu'iz-u'd-din was made on the Sultan's arrival in Gujarat, it may be presumed that other appointments were made earlier, though of course, it is not certain.

Isami refers to Sharf-u'l-mulk as one of the officers of the army which was led against Gurshasp (FS 412:7901). It *may be* that it was one of the earlier titles of Alp Khan.

Firishtah gives the list of appointment as: Malik Ahmad Aiyyaz was made Khwajah-i-Jahan and became the *Sipah-salar* of Gujarat; Malik Muqbil became Khan Jahan and was appointed *wazir-i-Gujarat*; Muhammad son of Qutlugh Khan was given the title of Alp Khan and given an *iqta'a* in the *mumalik* of Gujarat, Malik Shahab-u'd-din was called Malik Iftikhar and was ap-

It was some time after the Sultan's accession that a new class of officers whom Barni and other later writers refer to by the name of either the *amir-i-sadgan* or the *amiran-i-sadah* came into being. These officers continued to be an important factor in Gujarat politics till the end of the reign of Firuz Tughuluq for Afif too refers to them repeatedly. Nevertheless, it is significant that those writers who had closer acquaintance with Gujarat and the Deccan, as for instance Isami, do not refer to these people at all. Ibn Battutah too had no knowledge of this class though he had passed through Gujarat and neighbouring areas.

It is noticeable moreover that the rebellion to which Barni refers as the outbreak of the *amir-i-sadgan* appeared to Isami and Ibn Battutah as the outbreak of the Afghans. Sultan Firuz, it is reported, was unusually clement towards the Afghans and it is therefore not strange that the *amir-i-sadgan* were on the whole unusually loyal to him. It is therefore not unjustified to presume that this second tier of landholders in Gujarat, planted by northern rule were overwhelmingly Afghan. In fact, not only in Gujarat but elsewhere in India also, the Afghans were supplanting the Turks as the ruling race. While the Turks held the highest positions, the middle and therefore the more numerous places were being occupied proliferously by the immigrants from across the Indus.

Why they were given the appellation of the *sadgan* is more difficult to decide. What did this unit of hundred signify? Was it an *iqta'a* of hundred villages or did they maintain hundred horsemen each? It is difficult to presume that the former could have been the case; in Gujarat particularly, Muslim authority had not done away with the Rajput intermediary between the cultivator and the Muslim *jagirdar*, even in areas which were directly under their control and therefore the creation of such arbitrary units would have been very nearly impossible. It is more likely that each of these *amir-i-sadgan* led a corps of hundred horsemen and it is also likely that they were called *amir-i-sadgan* because originally their number in the three provinces, Malwa, Gujarat and Daulatabad, where we meet them, was limited to hundred.

pointed to the *jagir* of Navasari.

Yahya mentions these appointments as follows: Malik Ahmad Ayyaz, the officer-in-charge of the palace, received the title of Khwajah Jahan; Maulana Kawam-u'd-din became Qutlugh Khan and he received the office of *wakil-i-dar*; his eldest son became Alp Khan and he obtained the *iqta'a* of Gujarat; Maulana Abu Raja became Malik-u'l-Tujar and received the *jagir* of Navasari.

During the earlier phase of Sultan Muhammad's reign, Gujarat remained, on the whole, undisturbed. Rebellions in other parts of India had their repercussions; Ahmad bin Aiyyaz was commissioned to lead an army from Gujarat against the Sultan's cousin. Gurshasp, who had rebelled in the South in the very first year of the Sultan's reign.[1] This task he accomplished successfully, driving Gurshasp to take shelter with a Southern prince who sacrificed himself for him. The next prince was not so chivalrous and Gurshasp paid the penalty of his temerity in Delhi.

This success proved to be the stepping stone for Ahmad bin Aiyyaz; he was called to the capital and appointed *wazir*.[2] Who replaced him as the chief commander in Gujarat is not given but from subsequent accounts it appears that the reins of administration were henceforward held by Muqbil, as the Sultan's chief deputy in Gujarat.

It was under his charge but before the Afghan rebellions which shook the Sultanate, that the affair of Ibn-u'l Kaulami took place. Only Ibn Battutah mentions this affair; he appears to have retained a distinct recollection, possibly because Ibn-u'l Kaulami was both a foreigner and an adventurer who had gained from the exuberant generosity of Sultan Muhammad—a position not unlike that of Ibn Battutah himself.

The incident is worthy of note for it furnishes a glimpse into the functioning of the subordinate provincial administration, a phase of activity which has otherwise been ignored. The appointment of a commandant for Cambay, direct from Delhi did not commend itself to the provincial governor; nor did this commandant feel himself subject to the authority of a fellow-administrator, as he himself was an appointee from the Centre. He therefore proceeded to detach his charge not only from that of Muqbil but also from the purview of the *wazir* and claimed to be responsible only to the Sultan.

This affront to the *wazir* brought about his downfall; for by himself, Muqbil hesitated to act against the Sultan's nominee. His representation to the *wazir* regarding the insubordination

[1] FS 411-17; TMS 101; *Rehla* 95-6; Isami gives the entire campaign in detail. Refer also Mahdi Husain, *The Rise and Fall of Muhammad bin Tughuluq*, London, Luzac, 1938, pp. 142-4.

[2] Malik Ahmad bin Aiyyaz was in the capital during the Mongol attack led by Tarmashirin in 729/1328-9. *Rehla* 257-8 (App. F). for date: TMS 103.

brought forth a rebuke, stung by which he attacked Ibn-u'l Kaulami. Kaulami was defeated and compelled to seek refuge in the town. He was compelled to surrender the revenues etc. which were fowarded by Muqbil to the Sultan together with a letter of complaint against Kaulami. Kaulami likewise wrote to the Sultan against the governor.

It is surprising to discover that the Sultan had not been apprised of the conflict before the action took place; or, if he was informed, he allowed the *wazir* to send a message which was to lead to certain conflict. It was only after this incident had concluded, a number of soldiers had lost their lives and a local conflit between two of Sultan's officers had taken place that he sent Malik-u'l hukama to adjudicate between the two. Before any decision could be taken, the Afghan rebellion broke out.[1]

This incident thus reveals the confusion which is inherent in personal rule. Private wars between two of the Sultan's officers were not unusual and were not interpreted as a threat to his authority so long as any one of them did not overtly defy the authority of the overlord. The fact however was not recognised that such conflicts seriously weakened the fabric of administration and introduced an element of insecurity which was detrimental for the continued recognition of central authority. In instigating the governor to bring Kaulami to book, the *wazir* invoked the principle of the governor controlling the entire province; but in sending Malik-u'l hukama to adjudicate this quarrel, the Sultan interpreted it to be a private quarrel between two individuals. That this should have been done after and not before the conflict indicates a serious weakness of the system. It suggests that the Sultan instead of establishing precedents and procedures which would facilitate administration, encouraged such petty squabbles in the hope of maintaining his predominance. The policy of *divide et impera* thus interpreted and applied could have at best short-term results; its larger consequences were disastrous.

The really serious insurrection in Gujarat which drew the Sultan to this land began early in 745/June-August, 1344.[2] The details of

[1] *Rehla* 109.

[2] The chronology for the events in Gujarat during this period and the arrival and stay of Sultan Muhammad in this province has been constructed mostly from internal evidence and the few dates given by Barni.

this rebellion are given in *Futuh-u's-Salatin* while Barni is rather sketchy. Isami's account however gains in credence because it agrees greatly with the information given by Ibn Battutah.[1] Both of them call it as the rebellion of Qazi Jalal and his Afghan followers.

This rebellion appears to have formed part of the general uprising of the Afghans which commenced with the rebellion of Shahu Afghan in Multan.[2] Why the Afghans as a class became disaffected with the Sultan is not clear; the reason may be that by now they formed the bulk of the Sultanate armies in provincial centres, and thus when the Sultan began his experimentation, the sense of insecurity which it entailed affected them most. This feeling was intensified during the Sultan's sojourn in Delhi after the Saragdwari stay, when in his zeal for reform, he began a deliberate policy of victimisation against his older staff, removing and replacing them by fresh appointees.[3] Whatever may have been the motives of Muhammad bin Tughuluq, this policy resulted in a general wave of insecurity and resentment among his officers. In an age when dismissal could mean disgrace and death, and when the means of rebellion were by no means scarce, it is not surprising that this feeling culminated into a general rebellion.

Besides, it seems that by the middle of the fourteenth century, most of the secondary and many of the senior positions in the army and the bureaucratic hierarchy were held by the Afghans.

Isami writes that this rebellion started two years after Qutlugh Khan's departure for Delhi from Daulatabad. (FS 481:9253). This departure took place in 744/1343-44. (TFS 502). The Sultan started from Delhi for Gujarat on Ramzan 26, 745/February 11, 1344, after he had received information of Muqbil's defeat near Baroda. (TFS 509).

It is likely that the chain of events which ultimately led to these violent conflicts would have started nearly *six* months before their actual occurrence. Hence this date of *circa* early 745, i.e. Safar-Rabi I. 745/June-July-August, 1344, for the first signs of the rebellion.

[1] Isami gives the greatest number of details while to Barni it was nothing more than a rebellion of the *amir-i-sadgan* (FS 481-91; TFS 503-513). Much of Barni's space is taken up by his personal soliloquies concerning the Sultan, which though they are extremely valuable from other points of view, furnish few details of actual occurrences. Ibn Battutah too refers to this rebellion in Gujarat (*Rehla*, 113-16).

[2] For the rebellion of Shahu Afghan, refer FS 451, TFS 482-3; *Rehla*, 113. Also Mahdi Husain, *op. cit.*, 125 & 209.

[3] TFS 496-500. Mahdi Husain attempts an elaborate explanation of Sultan Muhammad's actions, *op. cit.*, 174-80.

The Turks who had formed the ruling oligarchy in the thirteenth century had been outnumbered by the middle of the fourteenth mainly because the Mongols had cut their links to their recruiting grounds. In areas where the Sultanate had expanded lately, these elements formed the bulk of the ruling classes; and thus in Malwa, Gujarat and Deogir where effective Muslim rule had penetrated by the fourteenth century, the Afghans held a great many of the positions of trust and authority. In fact, if any pattern can be discerned in the rebellions of Malwa, Gujarat and Deogir, it is that the Indian and Turkish elements of the ruling classes of these areas held steadfastly loyal to the Sultan, while it was an Afghan dynasty which came to power in Daulatabad.[1]

Thus what in the official terminology of Barni, were the *amiran-i-sadah*, appear in the factual knowledge of Isami and Ibn Battutah to have been Afghans. Muqbil had taken a part in crushing the rebellion of Shahu Afghan[2] and when he returned to Gujarat, he was commissioned by the Sultan to liquidate the troublesome elements of the Afghans such as Qazi Jalal and his followers.[3] Similar instructions had also been issued to Aziz Khimmar, appointed to Malwa by the Sultan;[4] and the recall of Qutluqh Khwajah appeared to the people of Daulatabad to herald a new phase, presaging ominous possibilities.[5]

Qazi Jalal and his associates were warned by the Malik-u'l hukama, the Sultan's brother-in-law, who was sent by Muqbil to entice them to his presence; possibly, he intended to repeat Aziz Khimmar's performance in Dhar. But forewarned, the Afghans appeared in a body and fully armed and thus the purpose of the governor was frustrated, and he also knew that his adversaries were aware of his game.[6] According to Ibn Battutah, the rebellion began on that date and Isami also writes, that it was a reaction against the cruel oppressions perpetrated by the governor Muqbil.[7] It is quite possible that Muqbil, though frustrated in his attempt to destroy the potential rebels in a single stroke, proceeded to dessicate them piece-meal. This hastened the actual

[1] *Infra* 119. [2] FS 451:8654. [3] *Rehla* 113.
[4] TFS 503. [5] FS 479. [6] *Rehla* 114.
[7] FS 481. Evidently these activities were not undertaken by Muqbil solely on his own initiative and responsibility; the Sultan's approval suggests that they were suggested if not ordered by him. Barni who is less informed writes that the *amiran-i-sadah* of Baroda and Dabhoi attacked Muqbil when he was on his way to the capital with presents for the Sultan. (TFS 505).

occurrence of the rebellion which had become a certainty when Muqbil's sinister plot was made known to Qazi Jalal and his Afghans.

The rebellion was led by Qazi Jalal and his associates were Bimbal, Jalal ibn Lala Yal and Jhallu Afghan.[1] They assembled in Baroda and prepared for the struggle. Baroda was selected probably because it was the headquarters of Qazi Jalal and besides, it commanded the trade routes which linked Cambay with the rest of the country as also north Gujarat with the south.

When these preparations were known to Muqbil, the *naib-wazir* for Gujarat, stationed in Patan, he marched towards the south. The battle took place in Dabhoi; Muqbil was decisively beaten and if we are to believe Isami, escaped only with difficulty and crept back to his refuge, the fort of Patan.[2]

This success gave the rebels control of central Gujarat and they exploited it by marching directly to the rich city of Cambay. The commandant of the city, Akha, surrendered it to them without a fight; and the city itself, though by no means well-inclined towards them as later events were to show, passed under their control.[3]

It is here that we hear for the first time of Taghi, the future rebel, in pursuing whom Muhammad bin Tughuluq was to lose his life. This Turkish slave had passed from the service of a noble, Safdar Malik-i-Jahani, who had himself been a slave of the wazir, Ahmad bin Ayyaz, to that of the Sultan. His ability won him recognition and he became the *Shahna-i-bargah* in the court of the Sultan. He however could not escape the sudden fall which all those who remained in the proximity of the capricious Sultan were at any moment liable and having incurred the wrath, was exiled to Yemen. He was in Cambay, possibly awaiting transhipment when the rebels entered the city.[4]

[1] FS 481. Ibn Battutah too mentions that one of the associates of Qazi Jalal was named "Jalul" and he displayed great bravery in the siege of Broach (*Rehla*, 115). This is supported by Isami who cites similar acts on the part of Jhallu in the siege of Broach. (Infra 109-10: FS 489-90). Ibn Battutah also writes that Malik Jahan Bimbal was one of the officers who accompanied Aziz Khimmar to Gujarat (*Rehla*, 114).

[2] FS 482-3. Isami takes no pains to conceal his partiality for the rebels and his antagonism to the Sultan and his officials.

[3] FS 482-3.

[4] For Taghi, refer TFS 517; FS 570-71. Also Hodivala, *op. cit.*, 300-01; Mahdi Husain, *op. cit.*, 185.

Taghi had by this time, it appears, acquired a reputation to which he lived up during his revolt. For the rebels liberated him and made him a co-equal associate of theirs. In the words of Isami, they became from four comrades to five,[1] Taghi however, at this stage, preferred loyalty to rebellion and escaped to Patan and joined the governor Muqbil.

Having occupied Cambay, the rebels spread out to establish control over the central Gujarat plains. Mubarak and Bimbal marched to Asawal, the junction of several important routes and thus an important centre even before Ahmedabad was founded, and captured it after twenty days of siege.[2] Muqbil in the north was thus cut off from the southern strongholds like Broach.

Thus outmanoeuvred and in the danger of being overwhelmed, Muqbil appealed to the neighbouring deputy of Malwa, Aziz Khimmar for help. This deputy had been recently appointed to Malwa charged with the task of liquidating disaffected Afghan elements in there. The denunciation of Barni regarding this appointment, the appointment of a base-born, has earned a notable place in later and modern histories.[3] He had celebrated his elevation by executing a number of these *amiran-i-sadah* of Malwa in a way which showed him to be a past-master of the revolting art of base perfidy, and which according to Barni, incited the rebellion in Gujarat.[4] Thus a month or two after Muqbil's ill-fated expedition, when the affairs in Gujarat were rapidly deteriorating, this successful governor came to the rescue of his less fortunate colleague.[5]

Two important developments took place in the meanwhile: Qazi Jalal having established his control over central Gujarat, assumed kingship;[6] and Muhammad bin Tughuluq started from the capital, coldly disregarding a suggestion from his tutor and ex-governor of Daulatabad Qutlugh Khwajah, that he be deputed to suppress this rebellion.[7] (Ramzan 26, 745/February 11, 1344).

[1] FS 482: 9290. [2] FS 483: 9294.

[3] For Aziz Khimmar, refer, TFS 503-7; FS 483; *Rehla*, 144-5. TA I. 215; GI I. 140. MT I. 234. Nizam-u'd-din and Firishtah follow Barni mostly and are not very valuable here as independent authorities. For modern authors, refer Hodivala, *op. cit.*, 298; Mahdi Husain, *op. cit.*, 177.

Isami's use of "*kh*" dispels any doubt that this officer was called Himmar and not Khimmar. He was not exactly one of the *canaille* as has been suggested by Barni.

[4] TFS 507. [5] FS 483: 9296. [6] *Rehla*, 115. [7] TFS 508-9.

It was while the Sultan was lodged at Sultanpur, a few miles outside Delhi to complete the Ramzan fast, that he heard the news of the disastrous defeat sustained by Aziz which culminated in his being killed.[1] The Sultan had visualised this eventuality for he had not been sure of Aziz as a general.

Isami gives a detailed and picturesque though vague account of the battle. The rebels were faced with heavy odds; they had only seven hundred soldiers against the enemy's six thousand. Aziz, guilty of the death of innumerable innocents, was himself in the centre with Taghi. Muqbil's forces held the wings.

It appears that the rebel forces had arranged an ambush to surprise the enemy. Thus the majority of their forces were concealed. Only a small section faced the enemy. Taghi seeing the depleted troops, charged into their midst, dispersing them and piercing deep into their defences. Having thought that they had won an easy victory, the royal forces slackened and inclined towards plunder. But in the last moments, the rebel leaders rallied their forces, and made a stand. Thus surprised, the royal forces were organising themselves when the concealed troops emerged and attacked them. The reinforced attack took the royal army completely by surprise and it was scattered and defeated. Aziz turned and fled but was caught; Muqbil and Taghi succeeded in getting away. Immediately after the battle, Aziz was executed.[2]

This success added immensely to the prestige of the rebels besides guaranteeing to them the control of central Gujarat, probably from Kadi to Broach and Cambay to the hills. They got a number of adherents and their strength waxed high.

Neither the site nor the date of this engagement is mentioned by any chronicler. Nevertheless, it appears that it was fought somewhere to the north-east of Baroda in Shaban 745/December, 1344.[3]

The rebel success was however followed by a peculiar form of "popular" resentment manifested by the townsmen of Cambay

[1] TFS 509.

[2] FS 483-86. The site of this engagement is not given.

[3] The Sultan received the news of this battle while he was in Sultanpur after leaving Delhi, in the last days of Ramzan. If the message would have taken about four weeks in its transmission, this battle's date would be about the last days of Shaban or the beginning of Ramzan 745/December, 1344-January, 1345.

against the insurgents. It furnishes an instance of resistance which was rare during this age.

Isami who was evidently not in favour of this resistance relates the incidents. From his version it appears that during the few days the rebels had been absent from Cambay, "malevolent" elements entered the town. These anti-rebel elements managed to convert the townsmen so that when the rebel forces approached Cambay after their success, "every house in it had become a citadel". The townsmen had already sent letters to Patan affirming their loyalty to the Sultan.

Evidently, the people in Cambay did not anticipate that the rebels would emerge successful from their second ordeal and therefore wanted to be on the safer side when the reckoning came to be taken. Thus rebel success came to them as a rude shock, but by then they had already committed themselves, royalist elements were already in town and a large number of fleeing soldiers had entered and built up a strong focus of resistance. A rebellion against the rebels was in the offing.

The rebels encamped outside the town and skirmishes commenced; the rebels sent raiding squads into the town which ravaged the town while those in the town harried the encampers in the open. At last, the rebels led a heavy attack on the town itself; a great many of the townsmen were killed and the rest were driven into their houses. The streets were barricaded and the key-points fortified. But since "every house had become a fort', the task of reducing the town was found to be impossible.

As this duel between the "townsmen" and the "plainsmen"—Isami uses these words because the rebels were encamped in the plains outside—was going on, one night Taghi entered the town secretly. His arrival heartened the townsmen so considerably that every man and woman placed himself under his direction and became "well-wishers of Muqbil". None dared to disobey Taghi and the whole town passed completely under his influence and control.

Daily conflicts took place. The situation became such that neither the plainsmen were able to reduce the townsmen nor were the townsmen able to drive away the plainsmen. This see-saw struggle continued for several months when other developments diverted the attention of the rebels; but to the last, the town of Cambay remained unsubdued.[1]

[1] FS 486-87.

The notable thing in this resistance is that this was organised and carried on by what were the usually the politically passive parts of the population. That these people should themselves take a hand in determining their affairs is, to say the least, unusual. It becomes truly astonishing when it is considered that they kept the struggle alive for several months without any material help from outside.

A factor which could have helped to arouse this resistance may have been that Cambay was primarily the city of foreign merchants. Such a city could be expected to have little interest in local insurrection and its main affiliations would lie towards the central power which in the long run was bound to be successful. Thus the resistance was financed by Cambay's merchant barons who were sceptical of Qazi Jalal's success and who feared that sooner or later Muhammad bin Tughuluq was bound to triumph, and on that day they wished their city to be spared his wrath. Taghi's entry provided the needed leadership and morale which enabled the town to sustain a long and what must have been a difficult and exhausting encounter.

The Sultan left Delhi on Ramzan 26, 745/January 31, 1345, on being apprised of the uprising in Gujarat. He halted in Sultanpur to complete his fasts, received there the news of Aziz Khimmar's mishap of which he already had a foreboding and discoursed with Barni furnishing the historian with a host of complaints which, fortunately for him, he vented forth in his chronicle. From Sultanpur, he started on Shawwal 1, 745/February 5, 1345 for Gujarat, taking the Rajputana route, which was the shortest though undoubtedly the most difficult.[1]

The army which the Sultan led on this, the last of his campaigns —he was not to see Delhi again—was a poor one. The flower of his army had already been decimated by his numerous campaigns and according to Isami, by his oppressive measures. Moreover, his sudden decision to move against the rebels had not allowed for the time necessary to equip the expedition satisfactorily. The soldiers were therefore poorly equipped, low in morale and above all mortally terrified of the Sultan. If Isami is to be taken at his word, the army consisted of conscripts brutally dragged from their

[1] TFS 509. This date is also suggested by Sir Wolseley Haig. I have not been able to accept most of the dates given by the learned author in his article, "History of the Tughuluq Dynasty", *JRAS* for 1922, p. 356.

homes; shirkers had been executed and idlers starved, so that the army moved in a chorus of wails and lamentations.[1] Isami may not be literally correct but it is undoubtedly true that this army did not have the quality of earlier ones, and the most important of its assets was not its fighting quality but the personality of its leader.

This army dragged itself rather than marched and the stages therefore were short.[2] Its progress through the desert was beset by privations and hardships, for when they reached Nagor, nearly half-way to Patan, the soldiers were famished due to lack of food and, as Isami writes, half-dead due to fright of the Sultan's well-known temper. In Nagor, the heart of the desert, they experienced further difficulties and scarcity, a development which Isami would make his readers believe was due to the guiles of the Sultan.[3]

In Nagor, the Sultan stayed for two months (Muharram—Safar 746/May-June 1345). The reason for this halt may have been the difficulty in marching during the hot summer months across the burning, waterless area between Nagor and Patan. In the meanwhile a noble, Malik A'zam, was sent in advance to strengthen the garrison at Broach. As this fort harboured the army from Deogir, Malik A'zam was instructed that he was to remain under cover and as far as possible, avoid battle.[4]

The Sultan resumed his advance after this halt and reached Patan about the middle of Rabi II 746/mid-August, 1345. Here he left Shaikh Mu'iz-u'd-din whom he had brought from the capital as governor of Gujarat, and without staying long in the provincial capital, proceeded to the scene of action.[5] He advanced to Pandu, a hilly place in the environs of Baroda and from there directed operations against the rebels.[6] The main rebel leaders were at

[1] FS 487: 9385-91. [2] FS 487: 9392-3. TFS 511-2.

[3] FS 488: 9394-9404. Isami paints a very affecting picture of the miserable host which accompanied the 'tyrant" Sultan. In Nagor, the difficulties were further augmented by scarcity (9404-9411).

[4] FS 489: 9414-24.

[5] The *naib* designate was the son of a prominent Sufi saint of the time, Shaikh 'Ala-u'd-din Ajodhani (TFS 508). This appointment indicates that Barni's charge that the Sultan promoted base-born persons only, is not borne out by facts. It also shows the Sultan's preference for men who were not professional soldiers as his nobles.

[6] Barni mentions Abu as the headquarters of the Sultan (TFS 512). This is scarcely possible firstly because, as Barni reports, the Sultan had already left Shaikh Mu'iz-u'd-din in Patan before reaching his headquarters. To go

this time besieging Broach; and therefore when they found the Sultan in their rear, they were compelled to take desperate measures. And in attempting these, they met their end in Broach.[1]

Finally, by Rajab 746/November, 1345, the Sultan reached Broach, which remained his headquarters during his stay in Gujarat.

The rebel leaders abandoned their assaults against the town of Cambay on hearing of the Sultan's reinforcements arriving in Broach. Broach and Cambay had both been standing out as islands in the midst of rebel-controlled territory and if these reinforcements succeeded in achieving their aim of strengthening royal authority in south Gujarat, then the rebels could be crushed from both the sides, from Patan and from Broach.

Nevertheless, the rebels could not prevent the entry of the royal forces into the Broach citadel.[2] The rebels arriving late, occupied the outskirts round the town and invested the fort. Isami who has certainly no sympathy lost for the Sultan remarks that in this investment too, the rebels were outnumbered and faced heavy odds: but the Sultan had advised caution and therefore the inmates of the fort refrained from coming out and thus avoided direct conflict.

Time was evidently running short for the rebels, for the Sultan himself was reported to be rapidly approaching Gujarat. Thus on the "third" [*sic*] day of the siege, Jhallu Afghan led a frontal attack in an attempt to escalade and capture the fort. In the meanwhile, the Deogir troops inside the fort, particularly a commandant of theirs, Shaikh Hamid, were getting impatient due to their forced inaction in face of the jeers and taunts which were flung at them

to Abu from Patan, the Sultan would have had to retrace his steps, something which is not likely. Secondly, to direct a campaign in central Gujarat from Abu is something extraordinary if not impossible.

Barni's knowledge of topography and place-names is evidently at fault here. He did not accompany the Sultan himself on this campaign, joining him later with tidings from Delhi when he was returning from Daulatabad (TFS 516). Abu therefore is a misreading for some other place.

I suggest Pandu, now called Pandu Mehwas, about fifteen miles north of Baroda as to have been the site which is likely to have been mistaken for Abu. Pandu is mentioned several times in the *Mirat-i-Sikandiri* and was a stronghold of some repute in those days, because its hilly topography in midst of plains, made it a situation of advantage.

[1] *Infra* 110-12.

[2] FS 489: 9421-4.

from across the walls: and as Jhallu Afghan made these sallies, they left the fort as the day was drawing to a close and attacked him.

Jhallu does not seem to have been prepared for this onslaught and despite a remarkable feat of arms which even reached Ibn Battutah some years later though in a garbled form, he was driven back. Qamar, the commandant of the fort, when he found his side on the ascendant, joined them and Jhallu fell on the field. In the meanwhile, the other rebel leaders, perceiving the perilous state of their troops, and the fall of their comrade, 'released their reins' and fled in all directions. Total defeat and dispersement thus ultimately ended the Afghan rebellion of Gujarat.

The subsequent fate of these leaders may be noted here. They succeeded in escaping into the fastnesses of the Khandesh hills in spite of the forces sent in pursuit by the Sultan. Their women and children fell into the hands of the victors. They sought shelter with Raja Mandeo of Baglana, a Rathor chieftain whose territory lay in the border region between Khandesh and the Deccan.[1] The Raja gave them a cold reception; but he mulcted them thoroughly and was on the point of surrendering them to Sultan Muhammad, when, luckily for the unfortunate rebels, the Deccan rebellion broke out and Sultan Nazir-u'd-din Isma'il Shah managed to get them to Daulatabad.[2]

No date has been given for the fatal defeat of the rebels but from internal evidence and co-relations, it appears that it took place in Jamad I. 746/September 1345.

The Sultan arrived in Broach shortly after the rebel forces had been broken, and true to his self, took fiercely vindictive measures against the erstwhile rebels. Malik Maqbul, *naib-wazir*,

[1] Hodivala has discussed the identity of this chief Raja Mandeo of Baglana. It is to be noted that Isami writes this chief's name very clearly as Mandeo (FS 491: 9457) .See also TFS 512; TA I. 218; GI I. 141.

This Raja, as Hodivala points out, was a Rathor and Salher and Malher were his two strongholds (as mentioned by Barni). A Sanskrit poetical history of his dynasty entitled *Rashtraudha-vansha Mahakavya* has been published in the Gaekwar Oriental Series, Baroda. (Edited by C. D. Dalal, Baroda, Oriental Institute, 1917). From this work, it appears that this Raja Man Singh was a contemporary of Muhammad bin Tughuluq (Introduction III, xvi-xvii, and Text, 17-18). This work was composed by Rudra Kavi in Shaka 1518/1576 A.D. (Hodivala, *op. cit.*, 299.)

[2] FS 497: 9597-9602.

who later rose to prominence under Firuz Shah as Khan-i-Jahan was detailed on the pursuit of the rebel leaders. A section of the fugitives were caught on the banks of the Narmada while in flight and were summarily executed while their leaders managed to get away.[1] The *naib-wazir* stayed near Narmada and, under instructions from the Sultan, executed the Afghan amirs, the *amiran-i-sadah* who had accompanied him against the rebels. Only a few managed to escape: and while some of them reached Deogir in time to participate in the holocaust which was to develop there, others were compelled to seek shelter with petty Rajput chieftains.[2]

Establishing himself in Broach, the Sultan busied himself in two activities: firstly "purifying" Gujarat of all dissident elements, and secondly of reorganising administration and collecting revenue which had long been in arrears. Whosoever had even been remotely linked with the recent disturbance felt the heavy hand of the Sultan. If Barni is to be believed, even revenue collection was used as an instrument of punitive action and harsh and relentless collectors extorted arrears with unnecessary severities. Moreover, in Broach and Cambay punishment was meted out to anyone who could be suspected of infringing the authority of the royal governors like Malik Maqbul.[3] One of the victims of this policy was Shaikh al-Haidari, executed because he had given his cap to Qazi Jalal and prayed for him.[4]

It was while he was in the midst of these activities that the Sultan was called away to deal with the uprising in Daulatabad.[5] But

[1] TFS 512. Firishtah writes that the Imad-u'l-mulk accompanied Malik Muqbil on this mission. GI I. 141.

[2] TFS 512.

[3] While these lists of atrocities make one turn away from the bloodthirsty Sultan, it is but fair to remember that no historian has presented the case from *his* side. Isami is openly hostile while Barni is frankly bewildered and more often than not, biased. Thus Isami charges the Sultan with apostasy (FS 491-2: 9465-9477) while Barni can never forget that the Sultan had unjustifiably elevated the base-born. This fact is to be borne in mind before a judgment is passed on the Sultan.

[4] *Rehla*, 92 and 115. For this execution at least, the Sultan cannot be censured; Shaikh Haidar had actually become a party in the rebellion. If the other people whom the Sultan punished were equally implicated, then certainly Sultan Muhammad's punishments may have been harsh and ruthless but were surely not unwarranted.

[5] For the Daulatabad rebellion which culminated in the birth of the Bahmani kingdom, refer FS 491-7. Also refer, H. K. Sherwani, *The Bahmanis of the Deccan*, Hyderabad-Deccan (no year), pp. 28-30.

before he left for Deogir, he constituted a tribunal consisting of his brother-in-law Sharf-u'l-mulk Khurasani, aided by jurists to examine those people who were accused of collusion with Qazi Jalal.[1]

Dates are, as usual, omitted by the chroniclers; it appears however that the Sultan stayed in Broach from Rajab 746 to Muharram 747/October-November, 1345 to May, 1346.

Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq had stayed in Daulatabad for nearly six months (Rajab-Z'il-h'ujjah 747/October 1346-March 1347), when he was recalled to Gujarat by the recrudescence of trouble in that embittered land. The six months he had spent in his southern dominions had also been difficult for him: as usual his tireless and ruthless campaign had served to check the rebels, but this time the secession was to be complete, once his back was turned. The Sultan created the Bahmani kingdom by leaving no other course open for its founders.

The rebellion in Gujarat to crush which the Sultan hurried back from Daulatabad, leaving the siege of that citadel in the charge of his lieutenants, was led by Taghi, an officer who had performed noticeable services for the Sultan, especially in instigating the popular rebellion in Cambay.[2] Why this officer, who had spurned the rebel offer of exaltation and had expiated for whatever faults he had committed by conspicuous loyalty in the last rebellion, should decide on this desperate venture, is by no means clear. He had been restored to his position of *Shahna-i-Bargah* after the rebellion[3]; but then something happened in the meanwhile which made him take the course which he had spurned earlier.

Apart from the actual incident of which we have no knowledge, and which was the spark which touched off this rebellion, the main factor responsible for this outbreak was the uncertain, wayward and vengeful temperament of the Sultan himself. Taghi does not appear to have found the Sultan quite forgetful or forgiving of his earlier faults. And feeling that once the Sultan was free of his

[1] *Rehla*, 92. The constitution of this tribunal is certainly not the act of a tyrant. It is significant that this fact which is favourable to the Sultan is noticed only by a foreign observer. Khurasani was the name of the noble sent as advance guard from Nagor to Broach (FS 489: 9420).

[2] *Supra* 105-7.

[3] Mahdi Husain, *op. cit.*, 185. I have not been able to trace the source of this information but it does appear to be probable.

southern preoccupations the axe would fall on him, he decided to act while he still had time.

He gathered around himself a following of the Afghan *amiran-i-sadah* who shared his apprehensions regarding the Sultan's future moves, though it must be said that he must have been hard put to explain his role in the earlier insurrection. The preoccupation of the Sultan with Daulatabad provided a propitious opportunity. Nevertheless, Taghi did not succeed in raising a substantial following or a strong force. His ebullient effort remained mostly individual and lacked the support which the earlier revolt had. Possibly by now, the potential rebels had either been liquidated or too greatly intimidated to start anything serious.

The rebellion appears to have commenced in the last months of 747/January-February, 1347 for the Sultan heard of it when he was besieging Daulatabad after his success over the rebel forces. The news which he received, informed him that Taghi had attacked the provincial capital Patan and imprisoned Shaikh Mu'iz-u'd-din the governor, killing many royal officers. Having established his control over the capital, Taghi proceeded to the commercial metropolis of Cambay and thoroughly plundered it—an activity which the inhabitants of the town must have found in painful contrast to Taghi's exhortations a few months earlier.

Taghi then proceeded to Broach but here his way was barred by the strong citadel and the situation of the town. He was besieging it when Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq arrived for the second time in Gujarat.[1] (Muharram-Safar 748/April-May 1347)

This insurrection coming at a time when Sultan Muhammad's hands were full with the Daulatabad trouble caused him a great deal of embarrassment. He left Daulatabad secretly and while on way to Broach confided in Barni who had recently arrived from Delhi, that this time he intended to make examples of the rebels, the *amiran-i-sadah*, the source of his perennial troubles. In fact, the Sultan opined, that it was his leniency during his last

[1] TFS 516. Isami gives no details regarding this rebellion except stating that Taghi was a faithful official of the Sultan driven to rebellion by his 'tyrannical' conduct. (FS 571-72). Barni is therefore the main authority (TFS 516-9), supplemented by Yahya bin Sarhindi (TMS 115-6), Nizam-u'd-din (TA I. 219-20), Firishtah (GI I. 142-43) and Badau'ni (MT I. 236). Refer also Mahdi Husain, *op. cit.*, 185-9.

stay that had caused this insurrection. Had he exterminated the *amiran-i-sadah* and deported Taghi, no such trouble would have arisen. Apprehensions regarding his head prevented the historian from contradicting the Sultan though he was more outspoken in his history.[1]

As the Sultan approached Broach, Taghi abandoned his siege of Broach and fled to Cambay; he did not have, as Barni notes, more than three hundred followers, a number with which it was nearly madness to oppose a ruler as capable, determined and ruthless as Muhammad bin Tughuluq.[2] The Sultan halted on the banks of the Narmada across the city of Broach and sent a force of two thousand under the command of Malik Yusuf Bughra in Taghi's pursuit.

Taghi met and defeated this superior force in the neighbourhood of Cambay, an engagement in which Malik Yusuf lost his life and his force fled in confusion back to Broach. The rebel followed this success by a further gesture of defiance; he executed Shaikh Mu'iz-u'd-din the governor, whom he had captured in Patan and had been holding so long a prisoner, an act which distresses the historian Barni for he feels that such accounts violate the canons of historiography with which he had begun his history.[3]

Incensed, the Sultan decided to lead the operations against Taghi himself. He crossed over to Broach, halted three days in the town and marched to Cambay. In the meanwhile, Taghi having thoroughly despoiled that town fled to Asawal on hearing of the Sultan's approach. His success against the Sultan had been remarkable. As Barni remarks with regret, that even with a small force, he had frustrated the various attempts to bring him to book.

The Sultan followed Taghi to Asawal only to discover that he had been eluded once again and Taghi had fled to Patan. The Sultan prepared to keep up the chase but heavy rains intervened. Besides, the poor condition of mounts in his army, due no doubt to the continuous campaigns, forbade any venture in bad weather. At Asawal therefore, the Sultan camped waiting for rains to end. (Jamad I. 748/August-September 1348).

[1] FS 512: TFS 516-7. [2] TFS 517-8.

[3] TFS 517. Barni's sorrow was genuine, for his idea of history was nothing less than a procession of dazzling acts of faith and conquest. When Taghi defied the Sultan and appeared to get away with it, the historian felt disgusted at having to record such events in his history.

Taghi had by now realised that with the merciless and single-minded Sultan at his heels it was impossible for him to survive in Gujarat. A desperate chance of success lay in attacking the Sultan while he was at a disadvantage: the surprise might earn a victory or at least open a road to escape.

Taghi therefore left Patan and advanced on the road to Asawal, while the rains were in full swing. The Sultan, apprised of this move, ordered an immediate start. The conflict took place at Kadi, nearly twenty-five miles north-west of Asawal.[1]

The pitch of desperation to which Taghi had reached is indicated by his method of making his soldiers fight on drink: and having drunk to excess, Taghi's soldiers attacked with a self-destructive frenzy which reminded Barni of the *fedayeen*—dedicated soldiers of faith. But this charge was more reckless than judicious; a solid wall of elephants met the assault and as the reckless attackers were unable to break through it, they were crushed to death by the advancing elephants. Thus by the time the rainy day was drawing to a close, their furious charge had spent itself out, they had been forced to retreat, their ranks had broken and finally they had to flee and seek shelter in a dense grove of the neighbourhood. Taghi's force had been liquidated and the rebellion was at an end (Late Jamad I. 748/September 1347).

Only the mopping up of rebel forces remained and the Sultan immediately took it up. The son of the slain amir, Malik Yusuf, was despatched in the pursuit of the fleeing Taghi. The four or five hundred captives paid the penalty of revolt with their lives.

Taghi managed to reach Patan and was able to evacuate it with his family and retainers due to slackness of the pursuers who lost their way, and being tired could not resist the sleep which overcame them. From Patan, Taghi took the only route which was now available to him; he went due west and crossing the Runn, escaped into Kacchh.[2] Later, he went over to Ra Khengar of Junagadh.

[1] Kadi is a small town north-west of Ahmedabad. 23°18′ N. 71°55′ E.

[2] Hodivala, *op. cit.*, 302. I agree with Hodivala in his conclusions. Nizam-u'd-din is explicit in his account that Taghi crossed the Runn into. Kacchh, towards Kant (TA I. 221). Kant or Kanth may therefore be Kantha-kot in Vagad, in the east of Kacchh, as Prof. Hodivala concludes (*Bom. Gaz.* V. (Cutch) 227).

Still it is peculiar twist of the language to speak of 'went to Kant by some road', especially in Persian. After all, Taghi could not have reached

The Sultan himself reached Patan shortly after his victory by the beginning of Jamad II. 748/September 1347.

With the arrival of Sultan Muhammad in Patan, the last phase of his reign as well as of his life begins. During these years which he spent mostly in the peninsula of Saurashtra, he attempted a two fold task: firstly, he attempted to bring the refractory Rajput chiefs to order and thus continue the work begun by Alp Khan; secondly, he tried to bring under his control, fresh areas that had acknowledged his authority only in a vague fashion or had not acknowledged it at all.

The Sultan's protracted stay in Gujarat had made him conscious of the Peninsula in a way no Sultan had been before. Previously, iconoclastic zeal alone had attracted the northern invaders to Somnath; and those invaders after justifying their predatory activities by ceremonially demolishing the temple, did not care to maintain the hold on the distant outpost. A flimsy and uneasy Muslim authority existed on the coastland, so long as the governor in Patan was strong and vigilant; but since the reign of Mubarak Shah and especially under Sultan Muhammad himself, internecine warfare had become the order of the day. No wonder therefore that the Rajput chieftains had gained strength and the Ra Khengar of Junagadh 'had restored the ancient glory of the temple (of Somnath)'.[1] Muslim authority had all but vanished in the Peninsula.

In the mainland itself, the negligence engendered by this warfare had allowed Rajput strength to grow. Piram was not an isolated case though it invited on itself the wrath of the Sultan and thus found a place in bardic traditions.[2] Rajput Gujarat had gone on in its way, possibly with indifference to the fate of Muslims in its land; unfortunately for themselves they had little political consciousness and no leadership which could have taken advantage of this opportunity. Individually they grew strong; but collectively

his destination except by some road—so why mention it, if it is not to be defined? It *may be*, though it is not probable, that Kant-barahi is *not* a toponym belonging to the 'realm of phantasy', and it may stand for Kotharia and Kantharia, which as Hodivala points out, are the names of places still existing in Kacchh (IG XIV 405) and Saurashtra (IG XVI 2.).

[1] *Bombay Gazetter* VIII (Kathiawar), 497. Hodivala, *op. cit.*, 302-3. "Mandalik Kavya," edited by H. D. Velankar, *Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan*, XIV No. 1, 42.

[2] See *Infra* p. 118.

they amounted to little. Most of them bought safety by acknowledging the Sultan during his stay in Patan.

The Sultan therefore felt the necessity for restoring effective authority in the mainland of Gujarat. He had besides a keen desire to compensate for his disasters in the Deccan by conquering Saurashtra. The proclamation of Bahmani rule in Daulatabad strengthened this resolution and the Sultan felt that with a glittering conquest, he would end the days of defeat and begin an era of victory. This success was to be an antidote to all his previous failures: and for this reason, the Sultan subordinated every other consideration to this main objective.[1] Deogir was postponed so that Girnar might fall.

For the Sultan, this was a time—particularly when he decided to conquer Girnar—of great psychological stress. The loss of Daulatabad had shattered all his hopes and dispelled whatever illusions which might have survived and he was on the verge of losing faith in himself, the most precious of all his gifts. For a Sultan who had begun as a well-meaning despot and ended as a neurotic tyrant, this loss meant moral self-annihilation: and it is possible that the Sultan might have accepted the unpalatable advice proffered by Barni, had not Girnar appeared to him as the talisman which would put all his doubts, all his failures to a mysterious end. It is not surprising that Sultan Muhammad who hoped to find in the Khalifa's investiture a magic wand, should have expected in the conquest of Girnar a miracle.

No Persian chronicler gives any details regarding the Rajput chieftains with whom Sultan Muhammad dealt. Bardic traditions too are vague and uncertain. Two of these chieftains however deserve to be noticed: the Ra Khengar of Junagadh and Mokharaji Gohil of Piram.

The citadel of Junagadh and the neighbouring hill of Girnar form the heart of Saurashtra, the focus of its defence structure. Its rulers have therefore been justly famous in Gujarat history both before and after Muslim conquest; the greatest of them battled the great Siddharaj Jayasinha of Patan. At this time, it was ruled by his namesake, the fourth Ra Khengar, who had succeeded not only in expelling Muslim authority from Somnath but had

[1] TFS 521-2.

consolidated his position in the Peninsula.[1] He was thus, at this time, the most powerful ruler in that region.

The only other Rajput chieftain to earn distinction for himself was Mokhraji Gohil of Piram. Piram is a small island off the coast of mainland Gujarat, three miles from Gogha in the district of Ahmedabad.[2] The main asset of Piram was its situation in the Gulf of Cambay; and Mokhraji had seized it from its former masters, the Koolees. From here, he spread his net over the Gulf of Cambay and attacked the shipping entering that mart. According to bardic tradition, he attacked a jeweller who was bringing gold-dust from Delhi and the jeweller brought his depredations to the notice of the "Toghluk Shah".

This "Toghluk Shah" was none other than Muhammad bin Tughuluq, the first Sultan to have visited Gujarat. He led a powerful army against the offending Gohil chieftain, and though the intrepid Rajput "roared like a lion" and though "a lakh of his attempts failed and the Shah was tired of his labours", in the last desperate fight, he was killed, earning in his death the encomium of the victor. The Muslim army destroyed this haven but the memory of the brave Rajput continued and even now the mariners passing his island place a few grains of opium on the spot he is reported to have fallen.[3]

The Piram episode is significant not only because it enshrines a tale of deathless bravery but also because it illuminates a facet of contemporary life and activity which has been completely ignored by the Persian chroniclers, no doubt, through no fault of theirs, for they were unaware of it. The degree of independence enjoyed by Rajput chieftains, their indifference to Muslim authority, in fact their hostility to it, which became active when opportunity offered itself, is well indicated by the story of this comparatively minor Rajput chieftain.

In fact, Muhammad Tughuluq's campaign failed to break the Gohils' power in that area. They remained in possession of their lands and a younger branch carved out a kingdom from itself in Rajpipla. As in Saurashtra later, Muhammad bin Tughuluq passed

[1] Vide footnote 1 on p. 116.

[2] Piram is a small island on the Gulf of Cambay coast in Ahmedabad district situated 4½ miles south of Gogha and 2½ miles from the coast of Saurashtra, 21°36′ N. 72°21′ E.

[3] *Rasmala* I., 305-9.

like a hurricane over this area without causing any permanent change.

The Sultan reached Patan after his success, as we have seen, during the initial days of Jamad II. 748/September, 1347. He was to spend, as Barni writes, three rainy seasons or, as Nizam-u'd-din and Firishtah declare, two years in Gujarat.[1]

The initial year of this stay, preceding the first rainy season was spent in the provincial capital Patan. (Jamad II. 748-Rabi I. 749/ September, 1347—June, 1348, and 1st Rains: Rabi I. 749—Rajab 749/June-October, 1348.) For the first time during his stay in this region, the Sultan made a sustained effort at reorganising his authority. In his camp in the Sahasraling tank, where he had halted, he received Rajput chieftains, accepted their offerings and presents and honoured them by conferring gifts and robes. It was one of those rare interludes during which the Sultan exercised his considerable administrative talents and it is no wonder therefore that, as Barni remarks, the traces of recent disturbances were banished from the country due to his wise policies.[2]

In Patan, the Sultan received the news from Daulatabad. The Deccan territories had broken away, 'Ala-u'd-din Shah had been proclaimed Sultan; all his oppressions and his cruelties, his exertions and his policies had yielded to Muhammad bin Tughuluq only the bitters fruits of humiliation.[3] The Sultan felt more despair than anger. For the first time in his life, he appeared to realise that men cannot be improved by violent means and unrestrained severities reap their own harvest of trouble. During his subsequent stay in Patan, as also later in the Peninsula, he eschewed the use of undue violence and put a long-delayed curb on his usually hasty temper.[4]

The design of reconquering Daulatabad and meting out sanguine punishment to the impudent rebels formed in his mind, though it was quickly replaced by the plan of subduing Junagadh and

[1] TFS 522; TA I. 222; GI I. 143.

[2] TFS 522; other authorities concur.

[3] Sultan 'Ala-u'd-din Shah was crowned on Rabi, II. 24, 748/August 3, 1347. (Sherwani, *op. cit.*, 37). This news would have reached Patan in about four weeks, i.e. by Jamad II. 748/September-October, 1347. Thus the Sultan was apprised on this dismal development shortly after his arrival in the capital of Gujarat.

[4] TFS 520; TA I. 222; GI I. 143.

Girnar. The Sultan with the earlier plan in mind summoned the *wazir-i-mumalik*, Ahmad bin Ayyaz, with other *amirs* and a strong army, to join him in Gujarat. These nobles reached the Sultan's headquarters with a large army, probably by the time the rainy season was just commencing; but by now the Sultan had changed his mind and decided to conquer Girnar.[1]

Further news of Taghi while this force was being awaited, confirmed the Sultan in his decision. It was reported that he had joined Ra Khengar of Junagadh. A few of his adherents had fled to the Rajput chieftain of Mandal and Teri, a small Rajput principality south of Patan on the border between the mainland and the peninsula. They were killed by the chieftain and as proof of the same, the ghastly present of their severed heads forwarded to the Sultan, their women and children being appropriated by him. This act of loyalty pleased the Sultan and the chieftain was honoured by being given robes and presents as tokens of the Sultan's gratification.[2]

The onset of the rainy season found the Sultan prepared for his onslaught on the Peninsula. He therefore left Patan and moved to the borders of Saurashtra, taking up his headquarters in Mandal. (Rabi I. 749-Rajab 749/June-October 1348).[3]

The rains over, the Sultan moved on to the conquest of Saurashtra, which engaged him during this year, side by side with the reorganisation of the administration in Gujarat which he had commenced in Patan.[4] The first to suffer was Mokhraji Gohil of Piram whose stronghold was attacked and destroyed; this success was followed by the establishment of Muslim control over the Gohilwad coastline of Saurashtra as far as Una Delvada.[5]

The second rains (Rabi I. 750-Rajab 750/June-October, 1349) found the Sultan in the neighbourhood of Girnar threatening the fort. The presence of the Sultan had its effect; many Rajput chieftains hastened to make peace with him by acknowledging his overlordship. Among them was Ra Khengar of Junagadh. Barni writes that the Ra was frightened by the huge force led by the Sultan

[1] TFS 520-1.

[2] Both these places are in the Viramgam *taluqa* of the Ahmedabad district. Teri is known as Patari. Mandal 23°17′ N 71°55′ E. Patari 23°11′ N. 71°53′ E.

[3] TFS 523.

[4] RFS 523-4. Other authorities follow Barni.

[5] *Bombay Gazetteer* VIII (Kathiawar), 285.

and wished to surrender Taghi alive to him; but Taghi got warned in time and effected his escape to Thattha.[1]

Subsequently, Ra Khengar came to the presence of the Sultan and made his submission. Barni writes that after the rains the Sultan captured Junagadh and held a court there in which a number of Rajput chieftains signified their submission and received robes and presents.[2] Firishtah however is at pains to dispel the wrong impression given by Barni; he states that after careful inquiry he is in a position to state that no other ruler except Sultan Mahmud Begada of Gujarat took the fort of Junagadh by force, and Sultan Muhammad, considering the submission of the Ra to be sufficient "withdrew his hand" from the siege.[3] A much later writer, Watson, is of the opinion that Muhammad bin Tughuluq attacked Junagadh, besieged it and captured the lower fort. Ra Khengar was taken prisoner but he was released and restored to his position as a vassal of Sultan Muhammad.[4]

It does not appear likely that the Sultan had to proceed to the length of investing Junagadh, for, as Firishtah writes, Ra Khengar forestalled any such act by acknowledging the Sultan and rendering homage to him. On this acknowledgment, the Sultan paid a formal visit to Junagadh where he held a *durbar* in which ceremonial acknowledgments were made. The Peninsula thus passed peacefully under the control of Sultan Muhammad—though this control was to be short-lived.

This formal *durbar* took place shortly after the rainy season which the Sultan had spent near Girnar. The Sultan now felt the necessity of returning to his capital from which he had been absent for nearly five years. But the idea of return could not be entertained so long as the victory in the west was alloyed with Taghi's escape. Besides, the Summeras who had harboured Taghi deserved to be taught a lesson; and Sind could be an additional conquest. The Sultan therefore planned to return to Delhi through Sind, reaching his capital with the lustre of a fresh conquest.

[1] TFS 523. *Tarikh-i-Sind*, 48.

[2] TFS 523. Surprisingly enough no information regarding Muhammad bin Tughuluq's advent and activities in the Peninsula is afforded by Rajput sources.

[3] GI I. 143.

[4] *Bombay Gazetteer* VIII (Kathiawar) 285 & 497.

The ensuring year (Shaban 750-Rabi II. 751/October, 1349-June, 1350) was therefore spent in making preparations for the assault on Sind. The Sultan consolidated his newly-won territories on the shores of the Peninsula. He received at this time the news of the death of one of his trusted friends, Malik Kabir, which grieved him deeply. The ablest of his officers, Ahmad bin Ayyaz and Malik Maqbul, *wazir-i-mumalik* and *naib wazir-i-mumalik* were detached from the army and ordered to proceed to the capital to take charge of the affairs there. Other officers, like Khudawand-zadah and Makhdum-zadah with some learned divines were summoned from Delhi. Most of them reached the Sultan's presence as the year was drawing to a close and the rainy season not far away.

Reinforcements in the meanwhile continued to pour into the Peninsula from all directions. Boats from Dipalpur, Multan, Kucchh and Siwistan were brought to help in fording the Runn.[1] But as these preparations were getting on way, the Sultan was laid up with a fever which appears to have been long dormant in his body, and which seems to have been nothing else but phthisis.[2]

The third and last rainy season in Gujarat was thus spent in Gondal, north of Junagadh, with the Sultan in his sickbed (Rabi II. Shaban 751/June-October, 1350). It was only after the Ramzan fasts were over that the Sultan was sufficiently recovered to move towards Thattha. In Shawwal 751/December, 1350, the Sultan's massive army moved towards that land.

Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq's stay in Gujarat thus came to an end. His achievements were not commensurate with the time and energy he had spent in this land. His authority in Saurashtra departed with him. Ra Khengar had no trouble in recovering his nominally lost authority and for the rest of his days, he remained independent of any Muslim governor.[3] The new conquest could not and was not directly administered. It had thus no need to declare independence; it merely relapsed into its former autonomy.

Little remains to be told of the brief span of life which had re-

[1] TFS 523.

[2] Ranking who was a qualified physician and surgeon has an authoritative note on the malady with which the Sultan was afflicted, and he considers it to have been phthisis (Footnote MT Trans. I. 319).

[3] *Bombay Gazetteers* (Kathiawar), VIII 497. Ra Khengar consolidated his hold on the southern coastline of Saurashtra and put down piracy and is also said to have conquered some off-shore islands.

mained for the Sultan. He successfully crossed the Runn without any mishap and reached the Indus where a Mughal chieftain, Altun Bahadur, joined him.[1] This accession of strength pleased the Sultan and Altun Bahadur received large rewards. The vast army moved besides the Indus to Thattha.

While Thattha was nearly thirty *krohs* (about fifty miles) away, the Sultan had a relapse of his former malady. It was a day of fast, the tenth of Muharram 752/March 9, 1351, and the Sultan broke his fast with a dish of fish which violently disagreed with him. The Sultan, though in pain, ignored the illness and taking a boat, continued the march.

Sustained marching for the next two or three days brought the invaders within twenty-five miles of Thattha and the army prepared for an assault on the fort. But at this stage, the Sultan's maltreated disease, abruptly took a turn for the worst. Consternation spread in the motley assemblage, placed as it was in a predicament from which there was no easy escape. The plight of the invaders was sensed by the defenders; and they redoubled their efforts to harry the benighted host.

It was in this crisis that the Sultan passed away on Muharram 21, 752/Sunday, March 20, 1351. With his death, the curtain dropped on one of the most significant, eventful and dramatic epochs in the history of India.[2]

[1] TFS 524; for details regarding this chief, refer Hodivala, *op. cit.*, 304.

[2] TFS 524: other authorities concur. Refer also, Mahdi Husain, *op. cit.*, 191.
The Sultan's epitaph on himself, given by Firishtah, is worth quoting:
We strutted about the world a good deal: we indulged in luxuries.
We rode many high-statured horses: we bought many highly-prized Turkish slaves.
We had many joys: till at last, we sank and became hump-backed like the moon.
(GI I. 144)

Chapter VIII

GUJARAT UNDER FIRUZ SHAH

Gujarat before Firuz Shah's arrival—Firuz Shah in Gujarat—Arrangements made—Zafar Khan I as governor—Shams-u'd-din Damaghani: his rebellion and death—Farhat-u'l-mulk Rasti Khan

NOT MUCH information is available regarding the reign of Sultan Firuz Tughuluq as it concerned Gujarat. This is due not to the paucity of accounts, for this reign is unusually rich in chronicles, one of which had the Sultan himself as its author. But it reflects the lack of events which could draw the historian's attention. Happy countries, it is said, have no history and after the brief and turbulent incursion of Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq in Gujarat, this land was afforded a long period of respite.

Several features mark this development. First, Firuz Shah discontinued his predecessor's policy of intervening directly in the internal administration of distant provinces. Rather, he took his lead from Muhammad bin Tughuluq's last ventures, in which he had tried the experiment of entrusting such provinces to his nobles on the payment of a fixed tribute—a tribute which could be termed a commuted quit-rent. Thus Gujarat was administered until Sultan Firuz's arrival there by Amir Husain, Nizam-u'l-mulk who was concurrently the *Mustauf-i-mumalik*, and who after his dismissal from Gujarat, became the *naib-diwan*. Later the Sultan was not averse to remove an old and trusted governor when an adventurer offered a higher bid for the same. These facts indicate that except the *doab* and the lands around Delhi, which formed the royal *khalsah*, the Sultanate had become divided into autonomous units, loosely federated by the acknowledgement of Sultan Firuz as the head and by the payment of tribute to him. It is not surprising therefore that by the time the end of his reign was reached, the provincial governor in Gujarat felt sufficiently secure to attack and kill a royal nominee who had been sent to supersede him. The acknowledgement had become purely formal by then.

The second feature which marks this rule particularly in Gujarat, was the upsurge of the Afghans as *amir-i-sadgan* and as other nobles. Sultan Firuz, Firishtah writes, was the first Sultan to show favour

to the Afghans[1]: and it were the *Amiran-i-sadah* who killed and despatched Shams Damaghani when unable to fulfil his commitments, he took the usual road to rebellion. Here also, unlike his predecessor, Firuz Shah recognized the limitation on his authority imposed by circumstances beyond his control. The undisturbed tranquillity of his reign, especially so far as Gujarat is concerned is explained by the fact that the Sultan made no effort to halt the process of dissociation, implicit in the rise of autonomous governorships and a quasi-independent aristocracy.

Probably, it is not surprising that, overwhelmed by Sultan Muhammad bin Tughuluq, the chroniclers forgot to mention the person whom he left as his deputy in Gujarat, on his departure. When the curtain rises again, nearly twenty years later, we find Amir Husain bin Amir Miran, entitled Malik u's Sharq Nizam-u'l-mulk, "holding" Gujarat, concurrently with his duties as *Mustauf-i-Mumalik*.[2]

The use of the word "holding" (داشت) is significant for it indicates the nature of authority exercised by Nizam-u'l-mulk in Gujarat. He held Gujarat as remuneration for his duties as *mustaufi*, or held large *jagirs* in that land and administered it as *naib* or deputy for the Sultan.[3] It is not possible that he would have been in Gujarat personally for long because the duties of the *mustaufi* were too onerous to permit this. It appears that he administered it through a deputy while he himself stayed mostly in the capital.

He therefore laid himself open to a severe reprimand when Sultan Firuz reached Gujarat after his disastrous march across the Runn of Kacchh. The unprecedented hardships which the army experienced in the desolate and rainless area, where it all but perished, inflamed the Sultan against the governor who had failed to succour them in time of need. Nizam-u'l-mulk was therefore removed from his charge, and his *jagirs* were resumed.

[1] GI I. 150. [2] TFS (A) 219-20;

[3] Some light is thrown on this problem by the affair of Damaghani, discussed later. In another passage, Afif also discusses the ways in which nobles, soldiers and others were given remuneration. The problem requires detailed investigation which is rendered difficult by the inexact connotation of some terms like *iqta'a*. Refer TFS (A) 219 & 296-7; Moreland, *Agrarian System of Moslem India*, p. 56, footnote; Qureshi, *Administration of the Sultanate of Delhi*, Appendix F; also refer *infra* pp. 130-3.

The humiliation was however not to last long; he was soon afterwards appointed as *naib-diwan*.[1]

Having reached Gujarat safely, the Sultan busied himself in resting and re-equipping his severely tried troops. Most of the soldiers had lost their mounts in the disastrous march across the waterless Runn; both the *ghair-wajihdars* or the temporarily employed troopers, inducted for the campaign alone, and the *wajihdars* or the permanently employed soldiers, were experiencing this difficulty.

The relief afforded to these men indicates the method of payment in the army of Sultan Firuz Shah. In this context, however, Shams Afif, the chronicler, does not refer to the pay or the remuneration the soldiers received for their services. What they received in Gujarat was an allowance for procuring mounts for themselves. It appears that providing mounts for the *ghair-wajihdars* was a responsibility of the royal treasury while the *wajihdars* had to secure theirs out of the returns they received from their villages. The problem which arose in Gujarat was that while money was given to *ghair-wajihdars*, for the responsibility pertaining to them was felt directly, no such advances were immediately forthcoming for the *wajihdars* who were not the immediate responsibility of the Sultan's officers.[2]

The ways and means in which Firuz Shah utilised the resources of his shrunken territory to maintain his vast establishment is a matter of some controversy and is not strictly relevant to a study of the history of Gujarat. Some idea of his provincial administration has already been furnished; and by scanning a passage which is rather obscure, it appears that while a large number of the vast concourse of slaves was distributed over different provinces, the actual expenditure of the royal forces and the establishments in Delhi and its immediate environs, was met by the apportionment of the revenue of *khalsah* lands to different types of claimants, according to ranks and necessity.[3]

The *wajihdars* who held villages round Delhi were in trouble

[1] TFS (A) 220 and 280. For the difficulties which the army faced during its transit through the Runn, Afif devotes two eloquent chapters (207-19). Other chroniclers have only a bare mention of the Sultan's arrival in Gujarat and his departure. TMS 138; TA I. 234; GI. I. 148; MT I. 249. Afif devotes three chapters to the Sultan's stay in Gujarat (219-230).

[2] TFS (A) 219-20. [3] TFS (A) 296-97.

because they could not receive their incomes from these lands and therefore could not furnish themselves with any of the necessary appurtenances of campaigning, especially, mounts. The Sultan on being apprised of this situation, sympathised with his soldiers and disclosed his understanding of their problems; he also advanced loans to the *wajihdars* which put their difficulties at an end. Finally, officials in the capital were directed to see that no harm befell to the villages granted to the *wajihdars*; officials in the camp were also instructed to guard against needless trouble being suffered by the soldiers on the march.[1]

The Sultan also informed his *wazir-i-mumalik*, regarding the difficulties and hardships encountered by him during his perilous march across the Runn of Kacchh. He also reiterated his determination to punish the ruler of Sind and requisitioned additional supplies for the same. Khan Jahan, on receipt of this *farman*, personally undertook to see that the requirements were met in full without delay. Ample stores were gathered and despatched to Gujarat in a short time, with a message from the *wazir*, wishing his master well and expressing a hope that he would soon be back in the capital.[2]

Firuz Shah had originally planned to bestow the charge of Gujarat on his *naib barbak*. True to his nature, however, he took a *fal* and the omen pointed to Zafar Khan, a noble who had formerly done good service in Bengal. He was therefore duly invested with a *khila't* and the "*iqtada'rs* of Gujarat were placed in his charge."[3] Simultaneous with this appointment, was probably that of Shams-u'd-din Abu Raja as *naib-diwan* of Gujarat.[4]

With these arrangements made, the march back to Sind was undertaken. It met with an immediate difficulty; the hazardous trek across the waterless, treacherous Runn was too fresh in the minds of the soldiers, to make them relish a similar experience once again. Large scale desertions therefore commenced, many of the

[1] TFS (A) 221. [2] TFS (A) 221-3.

[3] Here also it does not seem probable that Afif has used the word *iqta'a* in the sense of a personal holding, otherwise it would imply that the entire province of Gujarat became the personal holding of a single noble—which was obviously not the case (TFS (A) 225). It is probable that he was given a *jagir* in this land and appointed to hold it on the payment of a fixed tribute to the exchequer, as usual, having the right to appoint a *naib* to look after financial details. Hence the arrival of Shams-u'd-din Abu Raja.

[4] Afif devotes nearly fifty pages to the career of this remarkable man (451-498).

soldiers quietly returning to their homes near Delhi. The Sultan was apprised of the dangerous consequences of this depletion and advised to put up check posts which would prevent the soldiers from leaving. Firuz Shah was, however, more humane than politic and rejected this advice, arguing that it did not behove him to come in the way of these soldiers who had once faced superhuman odds for him but shrank from them for a second time—and if the conquest of Sind had been ordained for him, it would take place, everything else notwithstanding, and if not, nothing else would be of avail.

The only measure taken was to instruct Khan Jahan in Delhi to apprehend those soldiers arriving in the capital who had been in regular employ and who had taken money from the Sultan. They were to be exposed to public jeers for a day or two and then released—a chastisement which Afif informs us was *ma'nawi* or mild and not *khusrawi* or harsh which could have meant exile or death.[1]

As it happened, the Sultan crossed the Runn without any mishap and reached Sind safely.

It is difficult to place this campaign exactly. It was undertaken after 762/1360-61 for in that year Firuz Shah returned from Bengal, but before 772/1370-71, the year in which Khan Jahan died. Most of the time during the first half of this decade, Firuz Shah remained busy with canals, and then he undertook the Nagarkot campaign, a precursor of the longer and more arduous attack on Sind. It seems therefore that this campaign would have started sometime by the middle or end of 767/end of 1365. The Sultan was in Gujarat during the course of the year 768/August, 1367-August, 1368.

Shortly after Zafar Khan's appointment to Gujarat and the Sultan's departure, there arrived in Gujarat a person who was destined to rise to remarkable heights and to have an equally meteoric fall —Shams-u'd-din Abu Raja. It is not clear when Abu Raja joined Zafar Khan as *naib-iqta'a*, but he left Gujarat about 775/1373-4 to be appointed to the *diwan-i-wazarat* in 776/1374,75.[2]

[1] TFS (A) 225-30. Afif cites a long story how the Prophet had acted in similar circumstances.

[2] Abu Raja fell from grace after holding the office of *diwan-i-wazarat* for three years in 779/1377-78, which indicates that he had been appointed to that post in 776/1374-75. Subsequently, he was exiled. TFS (A) 492.

Abu Raja had been *naib-iqta'a* in Samana before he came to Gujarat, where by his parsimony, exactitude and efficiency he had tried the patience of the *iqta'adar* to the extent that he had him removed by direct application to the Sultan.[1] His relations with Zafar Khan appear to have developed similarly. The *naib* displayed great zeal in instituting reforms, initiating fresh measures and imperceptibly pushing the *iqta'adar* from his important duties and rights. Evidently, both the people and the *iqta'adar* were soon tired of this officious official; and as Afif writes, the people of Gujarat felt relieved of a great affliction when Abu Raja went to Delhi.[2]

Nevertheless, the career of Abu Raja in Gujarat does not seem to have been an untarnished one. When at the end of his tenure in Delhi, he had made a host of enemies due to his officiousness—and, as it was alleged, corruption—it was also pointed out that in Gujarat also he had defalcated from the royal treasury; he had taken out a thousand *tankas* which he never replaced.[3]

The relation between the *iqta'adar* and the *naib-iqta'a* does not appear to be clear, because it is not clear whether the word *iqta'a* has been used in this connection in the sense of a province or a personal holding. It appears that the Sultan had entrusted all his major provinces to reliable *amirs* and possibly the exchequer appointed these *naibs* in order to keep a look out on the collections and remissions of these nobles. But did these nobles hold these provinces as personal *jagirs* and were, for instance in Gujarat, the *amir-i-sadgan* placed under their control ? Or did the *iqta'adar* hold only a *jagir* in Gujarat and was the deputy of the Sultan and thus an official over this land? The likelihood appears to be that though holding an *iqta'a* in Gujarat, the *iqta'adar* of Gujarat functioned as a bureaucratic official over the rest of the *iqta'adars*. This is the situation in which an incident like the later Damaghani one could develop.

In the meanwhile other incidents took place. In 770/1368-69, Khan Jahan, the powerful minister of Firuz Shah, passed away, full of years and honours. His son succeeded to his post and his titles. An year or two later, in 773/1371-2, the *iqta'adar* of Gujarat, Zafar Khan, followed him to the grave; his charge too was continued by his son Darya Khan, who received the title of Zafar

[1] TFS (A) 454-5.
[2] TFS (A) 455. [3] TFS (A) 485.

Khan, assumed his father's position and carried on the administration satisfactorily.[1]

In 776/1373-4 there developed the affair of Shams-u'd-din Damaghani which was to last for nearly two years and end with the death of Damaghani in 782/1380-81.[2]

Shams-u'd-din Damaghani was a person who was originally with Zafar Khan and enjoyed his confidence; later he joined Imad-u'l mulk and was favoured with his patronage. His appointment to Gujarat and his rebellion and death are significant as a study in administration.

The appointment of Shams-u'd-din to Gujarat was due to the fact of his offering a higher bid for the *naib*-ship of that province than the one being paid by its incumbents. He managed to insinuate to the Sultan that these officials were either incompetent or fraudulent and were denying the royal treasury its just dues. He assured the Sultan that if he was appointed to the *naib*-ship of Gujarat, he would not only pay the normal, stipulated tribute but also an additional annual payment of 100 elephants, 200 Arab horses and 400 Hindu and Abyssinian slaves.

This extravagant offer was large enough to create suspicion in the Sultan's mind regarding his Gujarat nominees. Shams-u'd-din Abu Raja, the *naib* in Gujarat, was sounded whether he could pay a similar tribute; the *naib-iqta'a*, knowing the impossibility of fulfilling such promises declined to accept it. Thereupon, Shams-u'd-din Damaghani was appointed the *naib* of Gujarat and sent there with a silver palanquin and various other marks of royal favour.

[1] TFS (A) 422. Other chroniclers place this event in 772/1370-01. TA I. 234; MT I. 250; GI I. 148. Afif does not give the year of Zafar Khan's death but writes that even before it, the Sultan was thinking of calling Zafar Khan bin Zafar Khan to his presence (TFS (A) 499). Firishtah places it in 774/1372-3 while Yahya Sarhindi, Nizam-u'd-din and Bada-u'ni place it in 773/1370-71. GI I. 148; TMS 139; TA I. 234; MT I. 250.

[2] Afif gives 782/1380-81 as the year in which these events took place. Bada-u'ni gives two dates, the first when Damaghani was appointed (776/1375-76) and the second when he rebelled (778/1376-77). Other chroniclers place these events in 778/1376-77. (TFS (A) 497; MT I. 250-1; TMS 139; TA I. 234; GI I. 148.)

An inscription of Dwarka, however, definitely states that Damaghani was in Gujarat in 1377, if not earlier : a mosque was built in *bet* at the instance of "Malik-u's-sharq Shams-u'l-mulk wa-u'd-din Damaghan" and the inscription is dated Rabi I. 22, 777/August 21, 1375. (*Important Inscriptions from the*

In a few days, Shams-u'd-din Damaghani reached Gujarat; and in a short while he also discovered the impossibility of fulfilling his promises. It is possible that with the slow process of conquest, the increased revenue could have been made available; to expect that a sudden windfall would occur was to hope for a miracle. Besides, Damaghani did not find himself very popular with the Afghan landholders of Gujarat—the *amiran-i-sadah*; and lacking their co-operation, any effort either towards improvement or increase of revenue was an impossibility.

Having thus failed in making good his offer, Damaghani had no way open to him except open defiance. But it was a rebellion which was quashed even before it had begun seriously. The *amir-i sadgan* appear to have been waiting for just such a signal from the unpopular *naib*—and on the first signs of disloyalty, they descended upon him, led by one of their number, Sheikh-u'l mulk Fakhr-u'd-din and killed him. His severed head was sent to the Sultan together with an explanatory letter, both of which were well-received by him.[1]

Afif gives a slightly different version because he suppresses the basic facts which caused the supersession of Gujarat nominees and secured the *naib*-ship for Damaghani. He writes that the Sultan was in search of a reliable man to send to Gujarat for he wished to have Zafar Khan bin Zafar Khan by his side. Imad-u'l-mulk suggested Damaghani but at first the Sultan hesitated for he considered Damaghani to be an intriguing person; but when Imad-u'l mulk persisted, he acquiesced in the arrangement and sent him to Gujarat after having secured a surety by asking him to pledge by the tomb of Shaikh Nizam-u'l Haq.

On reaching Gujarat, Damaghani revealed his true self, his mind being affected by the riches of which he had come into possession. He appropriated all revenues to himself and not a "*dam* or *dang*" did he send to Delhi. Soon he unfolded his ambitious plan, a plan which evoked nothing but ridicule and laughter.

Baroda State : Muslim Inscriptions, edited by G. Yazdani and R. G. Gyani. Baroda, Baroda Government, 1944, pp. 2-4.)

Both Sarhindi and Nizam-u'd-din state that Abu Raja refused to bid on the offer made by Damaghani, i. e. this appointment took place before Abu Raja's departure (TMS 139 : TA I. 234). This proves that the appointment of Damaghani would have taken place in about 776/1374-75, as stated by Bada-u'ni, while his rebellion and death took place in 782/1380-1.

[1] TMS 139-40; MT I. 250-1; TA I. 234-5; GI I. 148.

Ultimately, the *amiran-i-sadah* banded together, killed Damaghani and apprised the Sultan of the disloyalty of his nominee by sending him the severed head and an explanatory communication.

The Damaghani episode is significant not only because it illustrates Firuz Shah's gullibility but also because it throws light on the relationship which existed between the province and the centre. We had an idea of this relationship in the case of Shams-u'd-din Abu Raja who was appointed *naib-iqta'a* of Gujarat directly from Delhi and whom Damaghani succeeded. Thus if Damaghani's charge was to be understood correctly, it meant that the royal revenue was being suppressed by Zafar Khan, Abu Raja and their associates: and he, Damaghani, was the man to set it right by remitting the appropriate revenues to the Sultan.

But such could have been the case if the revenues had been fluid and varied from year to year; but it was not so, for Damaghani offered an additional payment in excess of whatever was paid by his predecessors, which suggests that this payment should have been a relatively stable one. It can therefore be presumed that the "tribute" or the sum defrayed by the provincial exchequer to the centre had little relation, at least in the latter part of Sultan Firuz's reign, to the amount which the provincial deputy collected in his *iqta'a*.

Nevertheless, it does not appear that the margin between the two was disproportionately high. Had it been so, there would not have been any necessity for Damaghani to rebel. He would have waited for some time, strengthened his position and then revolted. But his failure to procure the sum he had promised left him no alternative except defiance. This fact indicates that, considering the establishment he had to maintain, the provincial *naib* did not enjoy a very lucrative income.

The provincial "economy" too—if such a word can be relevantly employed here—was extremely static permitting little scope for flexibility and enhancement of revenue: for, despite all his efforts Damaghani failed to wring out the additional revenue from it. The only additional income, over and above the not very lucrative landholdings, would have been earned by raids on foreign, that is, Rajput territory; and soldiering in the field could thus have, for the local garrison, a brighter aspect as well.

In other ways, in a political and economic set up in which the provincial exchequer's relations were limited by its contact with

Rajput chieftains or Muslim *iqta'adars*—for, until now they had no direct link with the cultivator in Gujarat—the yield was bound to be fixed and meagre. The entire Muslim ruling class received a small fraction of the total income of this region; and when on this income a heavy additional strain was placed, it is no wonder that it broke down rather than be adapted to the new demands.

Damaghani was succeeded by Malik Mufarrah Sultani. On his appointment he received the title of Farahat-u'l-mulk of and was later entitled Rasti Khan. He was the last governor of Gujarat; he ruled for nearly ten years and was defeated and killed by Zafar Khan, the founder of the line of Sultans of Gujarat.

During the tenure of the earlier governors, Malik Mufarrah had been entrusted with Dholkah where he built the Jami *masjid* in the inscriptions of which he has been commemorated as *Mufarrah-u'l-khawas Khas-u'l-khas Sultani* and *Banda-i-Firuz Shah*. These inscriptions are dated AH 962/1360-61, i.e. the time when Malik Mufarrah would have been appointed to Dholkah.[1]

On his appointment, his power was widely acknowledged, though by the end of his tenure, he had begun to entertain visions of independence and to act in a way that caused a great deal of uneasiness to the Muslim community in Gujarat.[2]

Except for one incident, which reflects the powerlessness of central authority in distant parts, during the age of the later Tughluqs, Malik Mufarrah's tenure was quiet. In Zi'l-hujjah 789/ December, 1387-January, 1388, a new governor, Malik Yaqub Khan entitled Sikandar Khan, arrived in Gujarat, after being invested by Prince Muhammad Khan, who at this time was enjoying co-equal authority with his father Firuz Shah.

This evidently implied the supersession of Malik Mufarrah Farhat-u'l-mulk. The governor, however, refused to obey the command; he fought, defeated and killed Sikandar Khan, thus setting central authority at naught. The meaning was clear; the chroniclers write that it was because Muhammad Khan was too much engrossed in pleasure that he failed to take note of this act. Soon after,

[1] "Revised list of antiquarian remains in the Bombay Presidency", originally compiled by Jas Burgess, revised by Henry Cousins, Bombay, *Archaeological Survey of India*, 323-7.

[2] *Infra* pp. 140-1.

Muhammad Khan had to leave Delhi and thus the threat to Farhat-u'l-mulk authority was no more.[1]

[1] Muhammad Khan received this news when he returned from the hunting expedition on which he had started on Zi'l-hujjah 789/December 1387/January 1388. Thus in Gujarat, this battle would have taken place about the time indicated. TMS 139; TA I. 237; GI I. 149; MT I. 254.

Part III

THE SULTANATE OF GUJARAT

Part III

THE SULTANATE OF GUJARAT

Chapter IX

ZAFAR KHAN II AS GOVERNOR OF GUJARAT

Zafar Khan: his origin—As an amir *in Delhi: his appointment to Gujarat—Arrival in Gujarat: Rasti Khan's defeat—Consolidation of authority: Patan, Khambhayat, Asawal—Idar: the three attacks—Saurashtra: Khandesh—Jharand: Somnath: Rajasthan*

THE INDEPENDENT Sultanate of Gujarat was founded by Zafar Khan, later entitled Muzaffar Shah. Sent by Muhammad Tughuluq in 793/1391 to displace Farhat-u'l-mulk Rasti Khan, governor of Gujarat since 782/1380-81, Zafar Khan nominally acknowledged the overlordship of the Delhi Sultans till 810/1407, when he ascended the throne as Sultan Muzaffar Shah.

Unlike most other military captains who founded independent Sultanates on the ruins of the Sultanate of Delhi, Zafar Khan was not a foreign Muslim. He was a convert to Islam from a sect of the Khatris known as the *Tank*, a splinter division which does not appear to have occupied a high position in the caste hierarchy.[1]

The Khatris were an agrarian people belonging mainly to south Punjab, claiming descent from the Kshatriyas of old; it is for this reason that Sikandar gives a long genealogy which would link the Sultans of Gujarat with Ramachandra, in other words, to the Suryawanshis. Like most genealogies fabricated to glorify royalty, it is very obviously a fake.[2]

Tank appears to be a fairly common appelation in south Punjab and Uttar Pradesh, ranging from sweepers and calico-printers to goldsmiths and agrarian classes, most of whom profess to be degenerate Kshatriyas.[3] Sikandar had a vague premonition that his heroes were vintners or professional wine-drawers; he is

[1] *Mirat-i-Sikandiri* (M. S. University Edition) (MS) p. 4. The Poona text has *Tak* while the RAS and Hyderabad texts have *Tank*. The lithographed edition has *Nank* which is manifestly incorrect. *Tank* appears to be the correct appellation.

[2] MS 4-5.

[3] Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of North-West India* I. 192; I. 271; II. 224; II. 254; II. 264; II. 370; III. 107; III. 169; IV 334; IV. 360-1.

therefore at pains to say that they were not *kalals* but because once the two brothers in the service of Firuz Shah drew wine from ripe grapes, this canard came into existence. However, he himself is not very sure of his better knowledge; he ends his defence by saying, "Whatever they were, they were men of noble and high spirit."[1]

In the very beginning, Sikandar writes that though the Tanks and Khatris were brothers and their customs and practices resembled very greatly, yet the former were expelled by the latter due to their fondness for drinking; and since that time, they came to be known as *Tank* or expelled.[2] But he does not mention whether the reason leading to the expulsion was something more than mere drinking and if it had a significant link with the commission of drawing wine given to the two brothers by Firuz Shah.

The fact that they were Tank Rajputs is not mentioned by Sikandar though that fact by itself would not imply that they came from high castes. Rajput is an amorphous term embracing almost every humble caste who has some vague glimmer of its origin; the lowest of all apply to themselves the term Solankis. Probably the Tanks were accepted as Rajputs by virtue of their kinship with the Khatris, claiming descent from the Kshatriyas; but certainly, they did not belong to the nobler houses of Rajputs such as the Bhattis and others in the Punjab.

The two brothers—Sadhu and Sadharan—who first came to the notice of Firuz Shah during his tenure as Prince, were *chaudharis* or headmen of the Thaneshwar area in south Punjab. They were men of position among their people who, as Sikandar writes, could summon thousands of men by a word.[3] They were noticed during a hunt of Firuz Shah, when tired by the day's hunting, he entered a village and met them at a party of *zamindars* or landowners; evidently, therefore, the two brothers were the *chaudharis* of a rather numerous agrarian community, tilling the soil, not high in the caste hierarchy but not without strength in the neighbourhood.

The way in which they secured the favour of Firuz Shah was unusual, and not characteristic of high-born Rajputs. Sikandar recounts the story in detail: in brief, it is as follows. When the Prince got down from his horse, he asked one of those assembled to pull off his long riding boots. One of the brothers did the job, and in doing so, saw the lines of sovereignty on the visitor's feet;

[1] MS 12. [2] MS 4. [3] MS 7.

being versed in the arts of cheiromancy, he concluded that his visitor was either a king or about to become one. He thereupon invited him for the night to his place.

At home, however, Sadhu's wife, an unusually prudent lady, questioned the advisability of inviting an unknown visitor to their place, however distinguished he might appear. The use of wine, she said, was indicated to loosen the tongue of the visitor. The beautiful young sister was chosen to serve the wine; and after the third cup, when the guest tended to jest with the girl, Sadhu's wife broached the question of identity, promising to bestow the girl on him, if found suitable.

Firuz Shah revealed his identity. The brothers, urged by Sadhu's wife to make most of this opportunity, hastily married their sister to their guest. Next morning, when the Prince accompanied by his newly-wed wife left for the capital, they were also with him.

In the capital, they entered Firuz Khan's service and became his favourite companions, as their sister became his favourite wife. Soon after, they accepted Islam and with the permission of Firuz, became disciples of Qutb-i-'Alam Makhdum Jahan, the forbear of Shah 'Alam of Batwa, one of whose descendants was Sikandar, the historian's patron, and that being the reason why Sikandar is at pains to emphasise this fact.[1]

Apparently, when Firuz succeeded to the throne, he conferred on Sadharan the title of Wajih-u'l-mulk. Sikandar writes, that at this time he also favoured Zafar Khan with the office of *sharabdari* or wine-serving; this seems to be unlikely, for as Firishtah states, Zafar Khan had been born only nine years earlier on Muharram 25, 743/June 30, 1342.[2] Possibly, it was as a sinecure that the office was conferred or it had been given to either Zafar Khan's father or his uncle.

The behaviour which won for the brothers rapid promotion in the court of Firuz Shah is surely not indicative of proud, aristocratic Rajputs. To pull off the boots of a stranger, to use a sister to beguile him and to hurriedly wed her to one who did not belong to their caste—these were not the practices current among Rajputs, a more accurate index of whose reactions in such matters, being furnished by the Bhatti ruler who was asked to surrender his

[1] MS 7-10.

[2] GA IV 178; MS 12. Firishtah writes that it was not Zafar Khan but his father who received this office.

daughter to Ghazi Malik. To cast off all earlier links and to pursue such connection for material gain—and then a voluntary change of faith—such factors indicate that Sadhu and Sadharan, though men of consequence among their own people, were not far above what was reported to Sikandar—namely wine-drawers.

The long reign of Firuz Shah was a prosperous one for the two brothers, and their children, Zafar Khan and the younger Shams Khan. Both these young men grew up to manhood during this reign. It is not known when Wajih-ul-mulk and his brother died but they do not seem to have been alive at the time of Firuz Shah's death.

Firuz Shah's death was preceded by ominous events whose full effects were apparent when he passed away. An acute war of succession followed leading to a rapid shuffling of the Sultans. Within a period of six years, a succession of rulers—Tughuluq Shah II., Firuz Shah Zafar, Abu Bakr Shah, Muhammad IV, Sikandar I and finally Mahmud II—had occupied the throne of Delhi. A state of strife and confusion leading to the invasion by Timur was the consequence; in the fierce struggle between the nobles for the possession of power, the Sultans were mere pawns and not rulers.

In this struggle, not Zafar Khan but his son Tatar Khan was a prominent participant. Nevertheless, Muhammad Tughuluq's attention was drawn to Zafar Khan by virtue of events in Gujarat.

It appears that Farhat-u'l-mulk had entertained the inevitable dreams of independence. He was careful enough to maintain appearances and bide his time; but in Gujarat, he began to conciliate Rajput *girasidars*, allow them a degree of latitude in the hope of winning their support when the moment for declaring independence arrived. He permitted the shrine at Somnath to be repaired and—if those who complained against him were correct—allowed some Islamic practices to go unobserved.[1]

This was highly distasteful to the *ulema* and other religious leaders of the Muslim minority in Gujarat. Not only were they afraid of the recrudescence of Rajput power in Gujarat but they felt that the mischievous tendencies of the governor would do irreparable harm to Islam in Gujarat. They therefore sent an appeal to Delhi, recounting the ambitions of the governor and

[1] TMS 7; GA IV, 178-9; TA III, 82-3.

his misdeeds and urging the Sultan to check his moves before it was too late.[1]

Muhammad Shah, when he received this intelligence, realised that it was beyond his power to check successive governors by means of punitive action, though he might remove the present one. It was therefore necessary to make it worthwhile for the one he sent there to maintain the fiction if not the fact of Delhi suzerainty. Zafar Khan was selected because by then he had earned a name for both ability and piousness, the two qualities necessary against a governor who was attempting, if reports were correct, not only political insubordination but also religious subversion.

Muhammad Shah left no stone unturned to ensure his governor-designate's future loyalty; he was accorded near royal honours when being invested with the command, so much so, that an exclusively royal prerogative, the red canopy, was conferred on him. With his own hands, the Sultan wrote out the *farman* appointing Zafar Khan to Gujarat, a *farman* which contained a long list of titles with which the general had been favoured.

As a last gesture, the Sultan visited Zafar Khan when he had left the capital and camped outside; a dress of honour, bestowed at this time marked the climax of the honours which had been showered on the departing general. The date of his departure was Rabi I. 3, 793/February 8, 1391.[2]

Zafar Khan took the shortest route to Gujarat, the one by which Muhammad bin Tughluq had marched on Gujarat. While on his way, he received the news of the birth of a grandson, who was to be famous as Ahmad Shah later on. To celebrate this occasion, he held a splendid *jashna* or festivity and distributed dresses among his officers.[2]

At Nagor, where as will be remembered, Sultan Muhammad had also halted, Zafar Khan received a delegation of complainants from Cambay, who recounted to him bitter stories regarding Farhat-u'l-mulk's high-handed activities.[3] Zafar Khan consoled

[1] According to *Mahmud Shahi* the date of the *ahd-nama* was Rabi I. 793/ February 8, 1391 while the expedition started sometime in Rabi II/March 1391. Other details are the same as in other authorities.

[2] MS 14.

[3] Such representations appear to have been fairly common. Thus later Muzaffar Shah the "Clement" received supplicants bewailing the "atrocities" of Medini Rai, Bahadur Shah received the victims of Silhadi, and Sher Shah

and reassured them and continued his march towards Patan.

Arriving on the frontiers of Gujarat, through the Abu-Palanpur ingress, Zafar Khan communicated with the governor, asking him to abandon his disloyal ways and after remitting the balance of revenue which he had appropriated, proceed to Delhi, as the Sultan had been pleased to appoint him (Zafar Khan) as the governor of Gujarat. To this message, Farhat-u'l-mulk sent an obviously conciliatory reply, asking Zafar Khan to halt where he was while he himself arrived to render accounts. The only condition he asked for was safe-conduct for himself.[1]

Strangely enough, this reply was interpreted by Zafar Khan as hostile, a fact which suggests that Farhat-u'l-mulk was not really so much at fault as he has been painted to have been. He marched to Asawal, possibly to cut off Farhat-u'l-mulk in Patan and sent further messages to him, suggesting that he should come to terms peacefully and proceed to Delhi.[2] In the meanwhile, however, Farhat-u'l-mulk had collected a force of ten or twelve thousand men, mostly Rajputs and assembled his troops in the neighbourhood of Patan. The chroniclers state that as he had set his heart on independence, he returned an unbecoming reply on receipt of which Zafar Khan marched against him.

This force was comparatively smaller, consisting of only four thousand veterans. Receiving the news of the approach of the hostile army, Farhat-u'l-mulk left Patan and advanced to meet the enemy. At Kambhoi, a small settlement near Patan, the battle was joined on Safar 7, 794/January 4, 1392, nearly eleven months after Zafar Khan's departure from Delhi.[3] It resulted in a decisive victory for Zafar Khan; Farhat-u'l-mulk was killed while fleeing from the field in an attempt to reach Patan.

This battle marked the beginning of Muzaffarshahi rule in Gujarat; as such, it has received great attention at the hands of

those of Puranmal, both the latter of Raisin. Their significance has been discussed elsewhere.

[1] TA III. 83; GA IV, 179; Sikandar does not appear to be correct in his statement that Zafar Khan entered Patan. MS 14.

[2] TMS, 11-12: GA IV, 179. The details of the negotiations are given by Firishtah and in *Mahmud Shahi* only.

[3] TMS 12-4. The battle, as TMS has it, was fought about 12 kos, (24 miles) from Patan. Also TA III, 74-5; GI IV, 179: MR II, 132; MS, 15; MA I, 32. Kamhoi is now a small town west of Patan on the Mehsana-Harij branch line of the Western Railway.

the chroniclers. Evidently however, it did not establish the newly-arrived governor in his new assignment. It only began the process of consolidation that was ultimately to lead to the installation of the independent dynasty of Gujarat.

It however gave Muzaffar Shah a reputation which he had, either willingly or otherwise, to live up to. He had triumphed as the champion of legitimacy and faith both of which were believed to be endangered by Farhat-u'l-mulk's ambitions. In fact, he had been deputed to this province on the application of those very people who were the upholders of orthodoxy in this land. As such, he had to appease this element and demonstrate to them that their fears were at last set at rest.

This effort envisaged the abandonment of Farhat-u'l-mulk Rasti Khan's conciliatory policies towards the Rajputs and the resumption of unremitting war against them. Of course, it was impossible for Zafar Khan to implement this policy literally; if we can judge anything of his character, he was more of a politician than a fanatic. His wars and campaigns were directed primarily towards consolidation and reorganisation, political ends which had a religious veneer only at the surface. Yet this veneer, Zafar Khan was compelled to maintain; he could not dissociate himself from those people who were his staunch supporters in the belief that he was the defender of faith in a country where it had been sorely threatened.

It appears unlikely that Zafar Khan contemplated the possibility of the establishment of an independent dynasty in Gujarat at this stage. Rather his hands were forced by his son. He nevertheless proceeded to lay the base for exactly such an eventuality and almost inadvertently became the founder of one of the most significant Muslim dynasties in India.

After his success, Zafar Khan proceeded on his tour of pacification. His first objective was naturally the capital, Patan, where he installed himself in the name of the Sultan. Formal ceremonies and festivities followed in which robes were given and distinctions bestowed. On the site of victory, Zafar Khan founded a village which, significantly, he named *Jitpur*. Obviously, Persianisation had not infiltrated deep in the Indian Muslims.[1]

This was followed by the despatch of agents to take control of the country. It was a minor campaign for reduction, the purpose

[1] TMS, 15 : MS, 15.

of which was to purge the country of all those officials who might have had leanings towards the defeated governor.[1] This work, as the chroniclers remark, was carried out with moderation and justice.

This consumated, Zafar Khan set out from Patan. The important mart of Cambay was the first city to be visited. This city which contained the greatest number of people alarmed by the ex-governor, was soothed by the new one. Fresh appointments were made to posts such as Qazi and others.[2] From here, Zafar Khan came to Asawal, which was becoming important due to its strategic situation as the junction of routes from almost all parts of Gujarat.[3] By the end of 795/1392-93, Zafar Khan had thus brought most of what had been the area of effective Muslim control, under his rule.

Consequently, he directed his attention towards the revived strength of the Rajputs, a potent threat to Muslim authority encouraged as it had been by Farhat-u'l-mulk. It was both a political and personal necessity to Zafar Khan, for these Rajputs had been his adversary's associates and were therefore opposed to him. In 796/1394-95, he therefore marched to Idar, an important Rajput principality situated in the north-east of Gujarat.

Idar was invaded thrice by Zafar Khan—first in 796/1393-94, again in 801/1398-99 and finally in 803/1400-01. The sequence may therefore be examined together.

Before this attack, it does not appear that Idar had in any way been subject to the Muslim governors of Patan. No tribute was ever paid to the alien, as Shriddhar, the author of *Ranmal-chhanda*, declares.[4] At this time, it was ruled by Rao Ranmal a valiant ruler

[1] TA III, 45 : MS, 15.

[2] In other places also, such officials would have been appointed. TMS 15 : GA IV, 179.

[3] TMS 15 : GA IV, 179.

[4] An account of the *second* siege of Idar is provided by a 15th century *kavya* written by a court-poet Shriddhar, eulogising the Rao Ranmal of Idar. The author gives a vivid picture of the host which accompanied Zafar Khan, though of course, his account is not free from the inevitable concomitants of court-poetry. The Rajput accounts pertaining to the fall of Jaor and Ranthambhore will be recalled in this context. (*Prachin Gurjara Kavya* edited by R. B., K. H. Dhruva; Ahmedabad, Gujarat Vernacular Society, 1-11 & 1-14). Thus Shriddhar writes that Muslim *thanedars* trembled in fear of their lives when the night-raids of Raṇmal sounded alarms in places as distant as Dholka, Cambay and in Patan itself (Intr. 7 : text 3:13-15).

who is said to have conquered the whole of Bagad, the mountainous area on the frontier of Gujarat, Rajasthan and Malwa. He therefore posed a threat to the authority of Zafar Khan in the plains of Gujarat.[1]

The first attack was therefore launched immediately after Zafar Khan's consolidation of his authority in the plains of Gujarat. It took its usual course. Idar was surrounded, the countryside was ravaged, temples were destroyed and Rajputs enslaved. The Rao was compelled to seek refuge in the upper citadel where he was so straitened for supplies that household animals had to be used for food. Ultimately therefore, he had to supplicate the invader for relief; he sent his son to Zafar Khan assuring him of his future fidelity and asking forgiveness for his past deeds. Zafar Khan too deemed it politic not to press the Rajput chieftain to an extremity on this occasion and, appeased by a large present and promised of future tribute, raised the siege and returned to Patan.[2]

The relief granted was however only temporary. The primary purpose had been to get a formal acknowledgement of superiority even though nominal. The greater task of the elimination of danger however remained, for until the period proud Rajput chief had been broken or liquidated, he remained a latent threat. In 801/1398-99, Zafar Khan returned to complete his task.

This invasion appears to have been a better planned one. Accompanying Zafar Khan were his son Tatar Khan recently arrived from Delhi and his brother Shams Khan, later appointed to Nagor. The soldiers were ordered to cut down the forest, the best defence bastion of Idar as they advanced and the roads were cleared.[3] On the Rajput side, *Ranmal-chhanda* gives a picturesque version of the campaign which is more poetic than factual.

This time too however, Zafar Khan had to compromise and return with his purpose unfulfilled. Shridhar gives the cause of this withdrawal to be the personal valour of Ranmal and his Rajputs who frustrated the attempts of the invaders—so much so that, flushed with victory, Ranmal declared that he would "plant his

[1] *Rasmala* I. 310 : TMS, 27 : GA IV, 179-80.
[2] TMS, 29-30 : GA IV, 179-80 : TA III, 85-6.
[3] TMS, 49-50. Sikandar gives the date to be 800/1397-98, while others write 801/1398-99. Firishtah writes that Zafar Khan raised the siege and returned to Patan in Ramzan 801/May-June, 1399.

banners in Dhar, Kadi would be his, Broach he would raid and Cambay too he would seize, and lastly, he would strike at Patan and capture the Sultan even, thus reigning supreme on this Earth."[1]

Persian chroniclers supply a more prosaic reason, namely, the news of the devastation of Delhi by Timur and the uncertainty of his future moves, which made Zafar Khan cut short the siege and accept the overtures of Rao Ranmal.[2] This evidently seems more reasonable: the abrupt termination of the siege gave the Rajputs a feeling of victory which is reflected in the *Ranmal-chhanda*. Surely, the comparatively minor chieftain of Idar was neither so powerful nor so situated as to challenge and vanquish the rising power of the new rulers of Gujarat. What they did accomplish was a resistance which was as defiant and heroic as Rajput resistance traditionally has been.[3]

The final invasion of Idar during the tenure of Zafar Khan came in 803/1400-01 when the offensive was renewed. In their brief notice of this campaign, the Persian chroniclers declare that Rao Ranmal, unable to withstand the siege abandoned his fort and fled to Bijanagar. Thereupon, Zafar Khan entered the fort, razed temples and placed a trustworthy officer in charge of the fort. A *thana* was established at Idar and the principality was divided among the nobles.[4]

The attack however does not appear to have been so shattering as this. Persian chroniclers do not write when Rao Ranmal regained his territories; twelve years later, in 815/1412-13, he is found to be in complete control of Idar, helping Ahmad Shah's cousin Mu'id-u'd-din in the rebellion against the Sultan.[5] A bitter struggle was yet to precede the final submission of Idar to the Sultans of Gujarat.

After his return from the first attack on Idar (796/1393-94), Zafar Khan was preparing to assert his authority in another part of Gujarat, namely, Saurashtra, or, as *Mahmud Shahi* puts it, he was "preparing to lead the holy warriors in the land of un-

[1] PGK Int., 8-9; Text 14 :70.

[2] Chroniclers are almost unanimous : TMS, 50-1; MS, 16-7; GA IV, 181; TA, III 89.

[3] *Rasmala* I. 310-2.

[4] TMS, 57-9 : TA III, 89 : GA IV, 181 : MS, 20. Tabaqat gives 795 as the year of this pacification.

[5] *Infra* 171-2.

believers" when his attention was directed towards the south-eastern frontier of Gujarat, adjoining Khandesh.

The two *parganas* of Nandurbar and Sultanpur roughly equivalent to the modern *parganas* of Talod and Nandurbar of the West Kandesh district, were often the bone of contention between Gujarat and Khandesh. In fact, the Gujarat frontiers were supposed to extend upto the hills where Khandesh commenced; but this was not always recognised.

The first ruler of Khandesh, Malik Raja, established himself in this hilly principality in 783/1382, extending his rule from Asirgadh near modern Burhanpur to this *pargana*. He had allied himself with Dilawar Khan, the ruler of Malwa and fancying that Zafar Khan would be too fresh and too weak in his new charge to pay much attention to frontier tracts, sent his son Nasir Khan, who attacked and occupied these *parganas* in 796/1393-94, expelling the *thanedars* of Zafar Khan.[1]

Zafar Khan however lost no time in marching towards the threatened parts. This prompt action made Nasir Khan described by the chroniclers as a wise and sagacious man, retrace his steps quickly. He retired to the fortress of Thalner and sent a delegation composed of the *ulema* to the ruler of Gujarat. This gesture by itself bespoke a desire to avoid further trouble and was duly reciprocated by Zafar Khan; he honoured the delegates and graciously accepted their plea. A treaty was concluded and according to the "protocol" of the day, presents were exchanged between the two rulers. Having thus secured his frontiers successfully, Zafar Khan returned to Asawal "having established friendship between the Gujaratis and the Burhanpuris."[2]

This campaign was conducted during 797/1395 before Zafar Khan marched against the border tracts of Jharand.

[1] Firishtah in his section on Gujarat refers to the Khandesh ruler as Malik *Rajah al-mukhalib* Adil Khan. Mahmud Shahi calls him Raja Nasir of Asirgarh. Nizam-u'd-din calls him Malik Nasir Adil Khan. Sikandar calls him Malik Nasir Rajah alias Adil Khan, *hakim wilayat-i-Asir* and Burhanpur. As Nasir Khan did not come to the throne till 801-1399-1400, this attack must have been made during the reign of his father when he had not been invested with regnal titles. TMS, 31; MS, 16-7; TA III, 84; GI IV, 180 and VI, 277.

[2] Both Firishtah and *Mahmud Shahi* remark that Zafar Khan abandoned his original intention of marching against Saurashtra to undertake this campaign. Sikandar, Nizam-u'd-din and Firishtah place the Jharand expedition in 797/1395-96, which indicates that it must have been a brief campaign. Firishtah makes an error when he places it in 777. (MS, 84; TA III, 86; GI IV, 180).

After his return from the south-east, Zafar Khan undertook the neutralisation of the troublesome Rajput chieftains to his west and south-west in Saurashtra and Kacchh.

The details of these campaigns are vague and the names of both the areas attacked and persons involved are uncertain. The first attack was against Jharand, which seems to imply the area bordering on the little Runn of Kacch, the north-coast of Saurashtra and southern coast of Kacchh.[1] It is said to have been ruled by Raja Bhara, who seems to be the same as Raja Virsinghji of Dhrangdhra (1385-92).[2] The campaign was a success in so far as there were few casualties and large spoils and the Raja was forced to acknowledge Zafar Khan as his superior.[3]

Zafar Khan followed his success by penetrating into Saurashtra. Junagadh was also attacked but to what effect is by no means certain.[4]

Finally, Zafar Khan paid his long deferred visit to Somnath. The necessity for this was more cultural than political—the desire on Zafar Khan's part to align himself with the long line of conquerors like Mahmud of Ghazna and Ulugh Khan. The arson and looting common on such occasions, was gone through, the temple being thoroughly despoiled.[5]

This campaign was completed by the end of 797-98/1395-96.[6]

In 804/1401-02, Zafar Khan came once again to the Somnath region—but this time it was to curb the refractory people of the neighbourhood.[7]

Returning to Patan by the end of 798/June-July 1396, Zafar Khan proceeded on another campaign against the small but powerful principality of Mandalgarh, a tributary of Mewar. The chroniclers assign this campaign to the desire of Zafar Khan to conquer a land as yet untrodden by Muslim conquerors;[8] but it could also have been due to the precaution Zafar Khan was taking to safe-

[1] TMS and MS Jharand. In other chronicles, the same reading is given though in some, the readings are different. TMS, 32; MS, 17; TA III, 86; GI IV, 180. This name is not found in the *A'in*, nor in the *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* or modern Gazetteers. Lutfullah suggests Junagadh but this is not possible (Trans. 6).

[2] *Bombay Gazetteer*, VIII (Kathiawar), 422. [3] TA III, 86.

[4] *Bombay Gazetteer*, VIII (Kathiawar), 497; Mandalik Kavya in *Bharatiya Vidya* XV. I., 42-3.

[5] TMS, 32-3; MS 17; GI IV., 180; TA III, 86. [6] TA III, 86.

[7] TMS 62-3; MS 17-18; GI IV, 181; TA III, 89-90. [8] TMS, 36-7.

guard Gujarat against Rajput raids. He is also said to have received news of Rajput restiveness from that quarter.[1]

Mandalgarh was an unusually strong fort and though Zafar Khan surrounded it, its subjugation was no easy task; hundred years later, Mahmud Shah of Malwa was hard put to accomplish the same. The forested belt around the fort which insulated it from direct assault was cleared; and then *manjaniqs* and other medieval assault armament was used to bombard it from all sides.[2]

The siege nevertheless was a prolonged one; six months elasped without the attackers making a noticeable impression on the fort. Zafar Khan had virtually given up hopes of success when luck turned against the defenders. Plague broke out inside the fort. And finding themselves helpless against this calamity, the Rajputs asked for peace.

Zafar Khan considered it providential and agreed to the terms. He accepted the tribute and stipulated that the same should be regularly remitted to Patan and further that the ruler would not harass the Muslims. He then raised the siege.[3]

From Mandalgarh, Zafar Khan proceeded to Ajmer, on a pilgrimage to the mausoleum of Khwajah Muin-u'd-din Chishti, probably to render thanks for this reverse turned into success. A trail of destruction is said to have marked his route.[4] From Ajmer, he proceeded to reduce Sambhar and Didwana, two dependencies of Nagor which were once said to have been under his father.[5]

Concluding his campaign against these two towns, Zafar Khan turned towards Gujarat. He returned to Patan passing through the Abu gap. As before, he ravaged the areas he passed through and among the areas to suffer were the two dependencies of Mewar, Dilwarah in western and Jilwarah in south-western Mewar.[6]

[1] TMS & MS confuse Mandalgarh with Mandu but both Nizam-u'd-din and Firishtah give the right location. TMS, 36, MS, 17-18, TA III, 86; GI IV, 180.

[2] TMS, 36-7; TA III, 86.

[3] GI IV, 180; TMS, 37-8; TA III, 87.

[4] TMS, 39-40; TA III, 88.

[5] TMS, 39. The chronicler adds that several Rajput chieftains were humbled by Zafar Khan during his return journey.

[6] Bhilwarah, Kelwarah, Jilwarah and Dilwarah which are often mentioned in the chronicles were important stations in Mewar. Bhilwarah lies about forty miles north of Chittor on the Chittor-Ajmer railway line. Dilwarah is seventeen miles north of Udaipur and four miles north of the famous temple of

Finally, he reached Patan on Ramzan 16, 800/June 2, 1398, after having been absent for nearly two years.[1]

Eklingji, the patron deity of the Udaipur house. (Ojha, URI I., 336 & 366). Kelwarah is better known by the name of Kumbhalgarh, the fort at the base of which it is situated. This fort, one of the most important in Mewar and its history, is a stronghold in western Mewar. (Ojha, *op. cit.*, 338-9 & 341). Jilwarah is a nearby station on the western boundary of Mewar and is considered to have been an important outpost. (Ojha, *op. cit.*, II, 548-9 fn.).

[1] TA III, 88; TMS, 40.

Chapter X

TATAR KHAN AND THE ASSUMPTION OF REGAL STATUS

Tatar Khan, the first Sultan of Gujarat: his accession and assassination—Zafar Khan's restoration—Assumption of royal rank by Zafar Khan—Muzaffar Shah: campaign in Malwa—Hoshang Shah's Restoration—Second march to the North: Kacchh—Ahmad Shah's coup *—Examination of the several stories—Zafar Khan Muzaffar Shah: an appreciation*

DURING THESE years, Zafar Khan had administered his charge as a deputy of the Sultan of Delhi. The credit for forcing him to disown the fiction of allegiance devolves on his son Tatar Khan.

When Zafar Khan had been commissioned to Gujarat, Tatar Khan had been left as an *amir* in the court of Muhammad Tughuluq II of Delhi. During the time Zafar Khan established himself Tatar Khan was an important participant in the chaotic politics enmeshing the court of the later Tughuluqs. These activities were however abruptly terminated a short time before the invasion of Timur when Mallu Iqbal Khan, the dominant noble, seized Panipat and compelled Tatar Khan to fly to his father.

Tatar Khan arrived in Patan by the beginning of 801/August-September 1398, the year in which Zafar Khan returned from his Rajputana campaign.[1] Immediately on his arrival, he acquainted his father with the details of the chaotic conditions in Delhi and pressed him to lend him sufficient aid to fulfil his northern ambitions. Zafar Khan was cautious; but before the expedition could be seriously considered the news of Timur's invasion arrived. For the time being, the proposed expedition was thus rendered out of question; Tatar Khan remained in Gujarat nursing his

[1] Sikandar writes that Tatar Khan reached Patan an year earlier (MS, 18). This is contradicted by other chroniclers all of whom mention 800 to have been the year, the year when Zafar Khan returned from Rajputana. Besides, Yahya bin Sarhindi writes that the battle as a consequence of which Tatar Khan fled to Gujarat took place in Z'il-qa'da 800/August-September 1398 (*Mubarak Shahi*, 171). TMS, 41; TA III, 88; GI IV, 181-2.

plans and accompanying his father to Idar and Somnath.[1]

The desolation wrought by Timur in northern India which brought Sultan Mahmud as a fugitive to Patan confirmed Tatar Khan in his plans to return to Delhi. He renewed his importunities and finally Zafar Khan gave in to his son's pursuasions.

At this juncture commences a divergence in the accounts of the chroniclers which gives a revealing insight into the historicity of their various accounts.

According to the official version of the events, Zafar Khan abdicated in favour of his son and crowned him as Nasir-u'd-din Muhammad Shah in Jamad II. 806/December 1403-January 1404.[2] The new Sultan appointed his uncle Shams Khan as his *wakil-i-mumalik* and proceeded to chastise the Raja of Nandot, i.e., Rajpipla to the east of Broach, a task which he successfully accomplished. During journey, he became ill and, though treated by the best physicians, succumbed to his illness. This illness, later chroniclers but not the author of *Mahmud Shahi* declare, was brought about by his over-indulgence in wine.[3]

Sikandar and Firishtah add a parallel version to the above which they say is the true one, in contradiction to the official version supplied by the *Mahmud Shahi*. They opine that this is widely acknowledged by the informed and discriminating people in Gujarat. Thus they declare that Tatar Khan, disappointed by his father's vacillating attitude, engineered a *coup*. He seized and imprisoned Zafar Khan and proclaimed himself Sultan in Asawal. Having seated himself on the throne and interned his father, Muhammad Shah marched to Nandot accompanied by his uncle and *wakil* Shams Khan.

During this campaign, Zafar Khan made overtures to his younger brother urging him to secure his release from the ignoble situation by encompassing the assassination of the new Sultan. Shams Khan demurred; the great love which Zafar Khan bore towards his first-born would never permit him to forgive the assassin, he declared. Zafar Khan, however, reassured him by asseverating that the undutiful and treacherous act had cut all such links between himself and his son and Shams Khan need have no scruples on this

[1] He stayed quiet between his arrival in Gujarat in 800/1388 and his *coup* in 806/1403.

[2] TMS, 69-70; TA III, 91-2; MR II, 133.

[3] TMS 70-2 : TA III 91-2.

account. Thus adjured, Shams Khan administered poison in a cup of wine to Muhammad Shah thus bringing about his death.[1]

Though compelled to bring about the death, the aged Sultan mourned deeply for his eldest son; his preference for his grandson Ahmad Khan was based on the affection he had for Tatar Khan. Muhammad Shah had ascended the throne in Asawal in Jamad II. 806/December 1403-January 1404: he died in Shaban 806/ February-March 1404. He reigned thus scarcely for two months.[2]

It appears clear on the surface that the "official" story is not the whole truth and that Sikandar is justified in his charge that the author of *Mahmud Shahi* has wasted much eloquence on it—but truth is truth.[3] It would have been highly improbable for Zafar Khan to resign the reins of authority and hand them over to a man who was setting out on a protracted and dangerous campaign, and also confer on him the insignias of state. Tatar Khan himself would not have preferred it: what he required was aid to pursue his northern ambitions, not titles for which he had no immediate use.

In fact, the "unofficial" version explains the two doubtful links in the official story—the sudden transfer of power to Tatar Khan and his equally sudden death. That the first was normal and the second natural was too much even for a medieval chronicler to believe without a question.

The first *coup* with which the Gujarat dynasty was faced had important repercussions besides compelling the reluctant Zafar Khan to assume the insignias of royalty and proclaim independence. First, as *Mahmud Shahi* has it, Tatar Khan in pursuading his father, expounded the theory that sovereignty was the prerogative of one who wielded the double-edged sword, and he proved his dictum by acting up to it.[4] This act set a dangerous precedent, not altogether healthy with which the new dynasty began its life.

The accession of Tatar Khan and his subsequent death also provided the skeleton in the cupboard which the Sultans could never sufficiently banish. Rebellion against parental authority was no new feature of Indo-Muslim polity but the assumption of kingship during the lifetime of an existing ruler was. In fact, Tatar

[1] GA IV, 181-2 : MS, 21-4. TA III, 92. T. Mub. Sh, 177-8.
[2] TMS, 70-1; also 72 for Zafar Khan's sorrow. [3] MS, 22.
[4] TMS, 70-1. This sentiment was a fairly common one as this couplet is repeated in other places too.

Khan went beyond his father and supplied him with a precedent. The moral of the story was not lost on young Ahmad Khan, the son of the assassinated Sultan.

The indifference with which the nobles and the army watched this murderous byplay and transferred allegiance to the successful ruler would have been remarkable had it not been usual in parallel situations. If sovereignty belonged to the one with the double-edged sword, the sword itself was not too particular as to who was its wielder.

The death of Tatar Khan was followed by the restoration of the *de facto* authority of Zafar Khan. Shams Khan Dandani was sent back to Nagor.

Released from his imprisonment in Asawal, Zafar Khan proceeded post-haste to the scene of his son's death. The body was carried to Patan and buried, amidst universal lamentation, the chief and the most plaintive mourner being the aged father himself.[1] So disturbed was he that he wished to resign the burden of government to his brother Shams Khan Dandani. So Sikandar writes, but it does not seem likely, for Zafar Khan could scarcely have got his son killed to put his assassin in his place.[2]

His first acts of authority were to reassure those who had submitted to Muhammad Shah during his brief rule. They were enlisted amongst the followers of Ahmad Khan who was nominated as heir-apparent and was prepared for his task.[3]

Even with this background, Zafar Khan did not move to appropriate royal titles and declare independence. He waited till the Tughluqs made it impossible for him to maintain the fiction of allegiance.

For during this period, the affairs in Delhi went from bad to worse. Mahmud Shah who had fled to Gujarat and gone from Gujarat to Malwa and thence to Delhi after the return of Timur, once more passed under the control of his old master Mallu Iqbal Khan. In fact, living in Qanauj, he left Delhi to Mallu Iqbal. This dominant noble engaged in numerous petty strifes to vindicate his authority and was at last killed in the conflict with Khizr Khan the founder of the Saiyyid dynasty on Jamad I. 19, 808/November 12, 1405. Mahmud Shah came back to Delhi but exchanged a new master for old.

[1] TMS, 72; MS, 24. [2] MS, 24. [3] GI IV, 182.

In 807/1404-5, news was received in Gujarat of the death of Timur and of the attack by Mallu Iqbal Khan on Qanauj. This attack aroused the sympathy of Zafar Khan and he prepared to march to the help of his titular sovereign. But before this march could take place, it was reported that Mallu Iqbal Khan had been killed. On the receipt of this news, in 808/1405-6, Zafar Khan dropped his proposed march to the north.[1]

By this time, however, a pressing need was being felt for the regularisation of *de facto* authority in Gujarat. The Tughluqs had ceased to issue coins even, essential for the economic life of the country. It was widely felt that the new unit needed a formal Sultan in order to be formed into an independent entity.

"When the striking of coins and the supreme authority were no longer exercised by the house of Delhi," Sikandar writes, "the nobles and officers of Gujarat, represented to Zafar Khan at an auspicious time and favourable moment, that the government of the country of Gujarat could not be maintained without the signs and manifestations of kingly authority. No one was capable of wielding royal power but himself; he was therefore indicated by public opinion as the person who ought, for the maintenance of Muhammadan religion and tradition, to unfold the royal umbrella over his head and delight the eyes of those who longed for that beautiful display. In compliance with his request, in the year 810/1407, three years and seven months after the death of Sultan Muhammad the victorious Zafar Khan raised the umbrella of royalty and took to himself the title of Muzaffar Shah, at Birpur."[2]

Nizam-u'd-din writes that Muzaffar Shah allowed himself to be pursuaded three years and four months after the death of his son. Thus the accession took place either in Muharram 810/June-July, 1407, which appears unlikely or in Rabi II. 810/September-October 1407, which is more likely.[3]

It will be seen that there is no basis for presuming that Zafar Khan appropriated the insignias of royalty before 810/1407, as has been assumed by Sir Denisson Ross. Nor is he justified in his statement that this assumption had made him cold-shoulder

[1] MS, 24. For details see *T Mub. Sh.* Trans., 179-80; TMS, 80-1.

[2] MS, 25; Bayley 83-4. Birpur is mentioned in the *A'in* as a *pargana* in the *sarkar* of Ahmedabad situated on the Mahendri. (Trans. II. 258).

[3] TMS, 81-2; TA III, 94-5 : GA IV, 182; MA I, 44.

Mahmud Shah when he came to Patan.[1] In fact Mahmud Shah had left Patan for Malwa much earlier because he thought that Zafar Khan did not give him due respect and would not help him to recover Delhi.[2]

Soon after his accession, Muzaffar Shah undertook an ambitious campaign to Malwa.

This campaign according to the historians of Gujarat, was undertaken with a desire to avenge the ruler of Malwa, Dilawar Khan poisoned by his son who had subsequently usurped the throne and crowned himself as Hoshang Shah.[3] Evidently, this benevolent feeling was not the only factor; al-Kirmani, the Malwa historian, cannot be accused of exaggeration when he writes that Muzaffar Shah, an old enemy who wanted just such an opportunity to seize and annex Malwa, determined to take advantage of the confused situation consequent on Dilawar Khan's death for his own ulterior purposes.[4]

Free from immediate worries after his accession, the time appeared ripe for expansion to Muzaffar Shah. Malwa was both weak and distraught and offered an excuse for invasion, impeccable by moral standards. For this purpose, Muzaffar Shah marched towards Dhar in the latter part of 810 about Rabi II. Jamad I. 810/September-October 1407.[5]

Moreover, the guilt of Hoshang Shah in assassinating his father has not been established. Al-Kirmani, naturally absolves him of this crime but Firishtah too gives him the benefit of doubt. Sikandar does not mention this altruistic aspect of the invasion and frankly confesses that the motive prompting the invasion was conquest.[6]

From Birpur, Muzaffar Shah marched to Dhar where Hohsang Shah opposed him but was beaten. He had, as al-Kirmani writes, ascended the throne only recently and had little strength at his command. Nevertheless it was a sharp encounter in which Hoshang Shah was thrown off his horse and wounded; he had

[1] CHI III, 201-2 & 294-5. [2] TMS, 65-6; MS, 20.
[3] TMS, 79-80, 81-2 & 83-4; MS, 25-6;
[4] *Ma'athir-i-Mahmud Shahi*, 32 a-b.
[5] TA III, 92-3 & 290-2; GA IV, 182 & V 234; MR II, 134.
[6] MS, 25-6.

to take refuge in the fort of Mandu which was then invested by Muzaffar Shah.[1]

The course of the seige and of the negotiations which took place, is related by the Malwa chronicler in detail. He writes that Sultan Muzaffar soon discovered that it was impossible to take the fort by force and thereupon decided to resort to foul means. He started by sending friendly messages to the besieged ruler, emphasising the bonds of friendship between himself and the deceased Dilawar Khan and suggested a friendly meeting in which the old relationship could be re-established. Though advised against walking into such a trap by his cousellers, Hoshang Shah accepted the invitation and came down to the Gujarat camp.

Being a young man and as yet inexperienced, Hoshang Shah was beguiled by the honeyed words of the veteran; the meetings continued despite the warnings of Hoshang Shah's advisers. Finally, one night the trap was sprung and Hoshang Shah was taken captive. Chaos was the result of this treacherous move and the city of Mandu was thrown into great disorder.[2]

This account is not given in any other chronicle though Nizam-u'd-din writes that Hoshang Shah was seized when he came to see Muzaffar Shah. Firishtah declares that not being able to oppose the Sultan of Gujarat, Hoshang Shah presented himself before him and was taken captive. Both Sikandar and *Mahmud Shahi* furnish no details except stating that Hoshang Shah was reduced to such extremities that he waited on Muzaffar Shah and was seized.[3]

It is therefore possible that what al-Kirmani relates is not far removed from the truth. Muzaffar Shah could not force the massive fort of Mandu except by starving it out, which in itself was no easy way. He therefore resorted to trickery and thus encompassed the fall of the opponent.

With Hoshang Shah a captive, Muzaffar Shah turned back to Gujarat. Malwa was left in the charge of Nusrat Khan, a brother of Muzaffar Shah.

Nusrat Khan was not a welcome ruler in Malwa and both the

[1] TA, GI, TMS & MS, *op. cit.* Al-Kirmani does not mention this engagement and writes that Hoshang Shah retreated into the fort without fighting (32b).

[2] *Ma'asir*, 32b—34a.

[3] TMS, 83-4; MS, 25-6; TA III, 92-3 & 290-2; GA IV, 182 & 232.

soldiers and the peasants were disgusted by his avariciousness and niggardliness—unforgivable faults in an age which applauded the generous and the magnificent. He increased revenue dues, and his treatment of the soldiers was both mean and stingy. Besides, as an agent of the Sultan of Gujarat, he was universally disliked.

Within a year, therefore, opposition mounted to such lengths that Nusrat Khan was forced to abandon the plains and take shelter in the fort of Mandu; only the fear of punishment prevented him from abandoning Malwa to its fate. When he had been thus isolated, the Malwa nobles selected Musa Khan from amongst themselves as their leader. Under his leadership, al-Kirmani writes, they recovered Mandu as well.[1]

Hoshang Shah received this news in his imprisonment where he had been placed in charge of Ahmad Khan. On hearing this, he applied to Muzaffar Shah, asking to be sent to Malwa, offering to hold it for the Sultan of Gujarat. Muzaffar Shah too found that it was difficult, if not impossible, to rule Malwa directly. He therefore accepted the proposal, released Hoshang Shah and sent him with Ahmad Khan to Malwa. Ahmad Shah escorted him to Dhar and returned to Gujarat. With a little difficulty, Hoshang Shah recovered his authority and remained to become one of the most eminent rulers of Malwa.[1] As an interesting variation to the above, al-Kirmani writes that as Muzaffar Shah saw no way of holding Malwa, he released his "guest", of course without any application on his part, and bid him a ceremonial farewell, after which he was escorted to Dhar.[2]

These events took place in 811/1408-9, within a year of the invasion and conquest of Malwa.

This campaign marks the initiation of long and eventful "inter-state" relations between Gujarat and Malwa which form an important chapter in the histories of these two medieval states. Their mutual dealings, the forms and protocol followed in their treaties and understandings, furnish a great deal of information of the way such relations were conducted during this age. The struggle for Khandesh, the weakest in the triangular state-pattern was always an important basis of conflict, as also the considerations of Rajput politics to the north. Until the middle of the sixteenth century

[1] *Ma'athir*, 35a. The fort of Mandu was captured in Rajab 811/November-December 1408.

[2] *Ma'athir*, 35a-36a.

when Bahadur Shah rung the death knell of the Malwa dynasty, this relationship formed an important sector of the "foreign policy" of the Sultans of Gujarat.

Immediately after his return from Malwa, Sultan Muzaffar Shah proposed to march again to the north. The occasion was to help Sultan Mahmud of Delhi in distress owing to the continuous pressure of Ibrahim Sharqi of Jaunpore. In 810-11/1407-8, Ibrahim Shah launched a full-scale invasion on the dicrepit ruler, reducing Qanauj, investing Sambhal and finally laying siege to Delhi itself.

Being appraised of the situation, Muzaffar Shah immediately prepared to march; it is likely that he advanced in that direction. The feint succeeded in drawing the Sharqi Sultan away from his offensive against Delhi. He cut short his seige and returned to his capital through his south-western frontiers to be ready for any eventuality which might develop as a result of Muzaffar Shah's advance.

But with his objective fulfilled, Muzaffar Shah gave up the projected campaign and returned to his capital. This march took place about Z'il-qa'da 811/March-April, 1408.[1]

After this the aged Sultan undertook only one more campaign before meeting a violent end. This campaign was directed against the refractory tribes of north Saurashtra and Kacchh having their headquarters in Kanthakot, situated in Vagad to the east of Kacchh.[2]

The royal forces in this campaign were led by Khudawand Khan. The campaign does not seem to have been difficult; its importance in the eyes of the medieval chroniclers was magnified because it was linked with the miracle of a saint whose blessing was sought for by the Sultan and who crossed out the names of those from the muster-roll, who were not to return alive from the campaign.[3]

Sikandar places this campaign in 812/1409-10.

The death of the aged Sultan is a tragedy forming a sad aftermath to the assassination of his son. It was the second dark episode in the initial chapters of the history of the Sultans.

[1] TMS, 85-6; MS, 26; *T. Mub. Shahi*, 181-2.

[2] Supra 115-16 fn. and 148; *Bombay Gazetteer*, V, 227; Hodivala, 302. Kanthakot in Kacchh is the place to which Taghi fled after his defeat and expulsion from Patan.

[3] MS, 26-7; TA III, 94.

Three different stories are current about the end of Muzaffar Shah. The first official and, therefore, the most camouflaged, is given by *Tarikh-i-Mahmud Shahi*. It states that in 814/1410-11, the Sultan sickened and passed away to be succeeded by his grandson Ahmad Khan.[1] It notes nothing unusual in his death and fulsome tributes are paid to the late Sultan, suggesting thereby that the succession was absolutely normal.

In *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi* and *Tarikh-i-Alfi*, a slightly different tale is told. In the middle of 813/October-November 1410, Muzaffar Shah became so ill that he realised that it was the "sickness of death". He elevated his young grandson to the throne with the title of Nasir-u'd-din Ahmad Shah and made his nobles tender homage to him. The *khutbah* and the *sikka* prerogatives were thenceforward exercised in the name of Ahmad Shah. Muzaffar Shah lived for five months after his abdication, passing away in Safar 814/May-June, 1411. Thus the accession took place in Ramzan 813/December 1410-January, 1411. Firishtah gives a slightly different date; he writes that Muzaffar Shah became ill in Safar 814/May-June 1411 and passed away on Rabi. II. 8, 814/ July 31, 1411.[2]

At variance with the above accounts is the one given by Sikandar on the authority of his "inside" knowledge. In fact, he positively alleges that the author of *Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi* has not given the reason for the death of Sultan Muzaffar, which he then proceeds to narrate. Ahmad Khan was commissioned by his grandfather and entrusted with a force to restore order in Asawal where the *kolis* had created some trouble. Instead of going to the scene of disturbance, Ahmad Khan marched out of Patan and camped by the side of the Khansarowar tank. Here he called an assembly of the *ulema* to whom he posed a barbed question: "If one person unjustly kills the father of another, is it legitimate for the latter (the son of the slain man) to avenge his father?" It is not given whether or not the *ulema* had the perspicacity to dot the 'i's, but they returned an affirmative answer which Ahmad Khan compelled them put down in writing.

Ahmad Shah then turned his steps to the capital and seizing his grandfather presented him with a cup of poison. From Sikandar's account, it appears that the aged veteran was more saddened than angered by the inconsistency of his children. Finding his

[1] TMS, 90-1. [2] TA III, 94-5; GI IV, 182; MR II, 134.

grandson relentless, he gave him a few words of advice which included a suggestion to execute those who had prompted him to do this act and then drained the proffered cup of poison. On the authority of the *Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi*, Sikandar places this event to have taken place in Safar 813/June 1309.[1]

The above version is reproduced in *Mirat-i-Ahmadi* and finds an echo in the twenty-two page fragment *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Gujarat*.[2]

Sikandar's story rings true on examination. The silence of *Mahmud Shahi* is understandable; being the historian of the most powerful of the Sultans of Gujarat, its author could scarcely have afforded to bring family skeletons into the open. Nizam-u'd-din's story of the second abdication also sounds thin: no Sultan could have abdicated twice in a lifetime and survived to tell the tale. In fact, this variation suggests that the official version was already coming under fire by the time Nizam-u'd-din wrote and therefore some elaborate subterfuges had been rigged up to conceal its flaws. In other words, it suggests a rebuttal of the story given out by *Mahmud Shahi* and creates a doubt whether the succession *was* really as uneventful and normal as it had been made out to be.

The necessity felt by young Ahmad Khan for removing his grandfather can be understood, though certainly not condoned. He was none too sure of his grandfather's favour being continued, for at this time Muzaffar Shah's other sons were trying their utmost to win their father's regard.[3] Ahmad Khan felt that he had to act quickly and decisively to secure his elevation and to prevent himself from being superseded by one of his uncles. That his fear was not entirely groundless was shown by his uncles' rebellion immediately after his accession.

The desire to avenge his father was, therefore, possibly not the only motivation behind this act. Yet, though Ahmad Khan was young at this time,—he was born while Muzaffar Shah was marching to Gujarat in 793/1391—he could scarcely have deluded himself to believe that his dastardly act could be justified by any means, least of all by a doubtful verdict extorted by means of a

[1] MS 27-9.

[2] *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Gujarat*, fol. 2/a. 'Abu'l Fazl repeats this incident in the form he had heard it. He writes that Ahmad Shah conspired against the life of his grandfather and deluding persons by withdrawing from active life, he waited till the time when during a festival, he massacred his twelve uncles. *A'in* trans. II, 269-70.

[3] TMS, 93.

legal quibble. In fact, he never could sufficiently regret the act which, he claimed, had been committed by him in his youth due to the advice of false counsellors.[1]

It was therefore an intriguing proceeding, this assembly of the *ulema* and the necessity which required a verdict from them however flimsy its legality may be. It can be doubted, in fact it can be taken for granted, that the *ulema* were not naive enough not to guess the hidden purpose behind Ahmad Khan's seemingly innocent query. If so, why did they give the verdict the implications of which were quite apparent? The august assembly was no part of a twenty-year old boy's plan—it was part of a deep-laid conspiracy of which the young heir-apparent was only the mouthpiece.

In this plan, the assembly, though a mere farce, had an important role. It was a salve, a very potent one, to quieten the Muslim public's sense of legality, likely to be outraged by the patricidal *coup*. The fact that the *ulema* had sanctioned the act and that the old Sultan had received a well-merited punishment could prevent a general outbreak. It also implicated the *ulema*, at least a powerful section of them in the guilty act and thus made them have a stake in the fortunes of Ahmad Shah and his party.

The calm resignation with which the old and harried Muzaffar Shah surrendered his life to his grandson evokes not only sympathy but also commisseration. At the end of a long, troubled and eventful life, the founder of the dynasty of the Sultans of Gujarat certainly did not deserve a cup of poison. It was his voluntary surrender of life, almost a suicidal act, which facilitated his grandson's accession. Had the old man forced a trial of strength, one wonders if Ahmad Khan would have come off uppermost.

This event took place sometime before Ramzan 14, 813/January 11, 1411.[2] The actual date is not mentioned by the chroniclers, but as the story of abdication by Muzaffar Shah cannot be accepted, the death must have occurred shortly before his grandson's accession.

Muzaffar Shah may not have been the founder of the Sultanate of Gujarat; to have placed the Sultanate firmly on its feet was

[1] MS, 28.

[2] MS, 30. Nizam-u'd-din and Firishtah give Rabi II. 4, 846 as the date of Ahmad Shah's death and place his regnal period at 32 years 6 months and 20 days—which works out to give Ramzan 13, 813, as the date of accession. GI IV, 190; TA, III, 124.

the work of his grandson. But certainly, it was he who laid the basis on which arose the superstructure which was the Sultanate of Gujarat. By his campaigns, by his diplomacy, by his indefatigable energy, he established his authority over a large part of Gujarat and bequeathed to his successors an authority which was not only independent of outside control but also unrivalled in Gujarat.

Born on Muharram 25, 743/June 30, 1342, in the darkening days of Muhammad bin Tughuluq's reign, Muzaffar Shah, then Zafar Khan, passed the greater part of his life in the court of the later Tughuluqs. In particular, he attained maturity under Firuz Shah to whom his family owed its ascendancy, and in whose reign royal authority became slack enough to give the nobles an influence, denied to them since the days of the Albari Turks. Yet, so deep was his loyalty to the Sultan that when the master was no more, when the throne of Delhi had become a transient prize for the short-lived and he had been placed in a distant charge with virtually unrestricted powers, he refrained from assuming any tokens of independent rule, till he was literally compelled to do so.

This therefore was one of the chief characteristics of Muzaffar Shah—a deeply ingrained sense of legitimacy which forbade any act which savoured of the illegal. He came to Gujarat as a champion of the legal sovereign and conquered it in the name of his master; he refrained from obliging his impatient son till he was compelled to take the law in his own hands. Even when the fiction of allegiance was past redemption and the way had been chalked out by his son, he hesitated to assume regal authority.

Probably, it is not easy to give up the ways of a lifetime. Yet, in this fine sense of legality, a deeper motive can be perceived. Muzaffar Shah did not want that his dynasty should commence with a repudiation of the "salt" which had brought it into being. He wanted to build a tradition which would be beyond the immediate and would have a weight enough to restrain the rash use of force against an established authority. In his own limited way, he was attempting to make the law stronger than the man.

It was an irony of fate that his end was a negation of his life, of the ideas which he had endeavoured to weave into practice. Nevertheless, if such was the purpose of Muzaffar Shah's policy, he was attempting the impossible. He was trying to frame succession on legal basis, to fetter absolute power within constitutional limits —however elementary and inadequate his attempt might have

been. The attempt had been made and had failed in Delhi; chances of its success in Patan, were none too bright. The supreme hitch lay not in the method of succession but in the nature of absolutist power itself. So long as an absolutist authority remains unperturbed by rival clusters deriving their strength from sources independent of its control, it can hardly admit impediments to itself. To compromise is foreign to autocracy; and equally difficult if not impossible is the peaceful transfer of such power from one incumbent to another.

Linked with the predominant sense of legitimacy, Muzaffar Shah, throughout his reign, felt a deep sense of obligation to his co-religionist in Gujarat. Next to the legal overlord in Delhi, they were the charter of his rule; he had been sent to Gujarat on their supplication and, with their help, he had overthrown the Rajput-supported rebel governor of Gujarat. To rescue Muslim authority, therefore, from the growing menace of Rajput renascence, was for him an immediate necessity; and this is the reason for his persistent campaigns against Idar, against Saurashtra and even against Somnath.

Considering the political situation at the end of the fourteenth century from the ruler's viewpoint, it does seem that this alarm was justified. For nearly half a century, Muslim authority had been relaxed to the point of inactivity; and during this interval, the Rajputs had steadily gained in strength. By the time Zafar Khan came on the scene, it was a formidable threat to the Muslim nucleus at Patan.

To characterise this duel between the Muslim and the Rajput as religious would be misleading. It was a political struggle for predominance and an economic battle for land. Muzaffar Shah himself was as keen to forestall a threat from a Muslim rival as from a Rajput—witness, his prompt action against Nasir Khan and his attack on Malwa.

The "foreign" relations which began with him were also the precursors of an age. He correctly visualised the geopolitical relations between Gujarat and Malwa and Gujarat and Rajasthan, and attempted to make Gujarat a power stronger than either. To attain these ends, he took resorts to means manifestly Machiavellian, as the chronicler of Malwa, al-Kirmani bitterly pointed out. The "balance of power" diplomacy which was to characterise the relations of this "family of nations"—Gujarat, Malwa, Khandesh,

the Bahmani kingdom and Rajasthan, especially Mewar—till Mughal conquest, took shape in the reign of Muzaffar Shah III.

It is hard to think of Muzaffar Shah as a fanatic though he did use religion for political ends—probably he was sincerely convinced that in pulling down the temple of Somnath, he was obeying a mandate, higher than the merely mundane. His actions display a balance which was at once sober and level-headed. It seems that he would not have inflicted pain if he could have done without it.

Life was hard in the end for the aged veteran; at the biblical age of three scores and ten, he had to quaff the cup of poison held out to him by his brash grandson. To be disillusioned twice in a lifetime about one's own flesh and blood is a trial sufficient to despair one of his life and its purpose; no wonder, therefore, that the old man was more resigned than angry and accepted the fatal cup without protest and without resistance. Probably, he welcomed a release from an existence which, despite his toil, offered him frustrations in the shape of his own children.

Chapter XI

AHMAD SHAH: THE FIRST PHASE VINDICATION OF AUTHORITY

Firuz Khan's Rebellion—The Campaign—Negotiations—Revival of trouble in north Gujarat—Rebellion of the Maliks—Campaign in Saurasthra—Imposition of the jiziyah*—Khandesh: Hoshang Shah's attack—Khandesh and Saurashtra*

AHMAD SHAH ascended the throne on Ramzan 13, 813/January 10, 1411, at Patan. The *coup* which he had engineered had its inevitable consequence in stirring up opposition to him immediately after. "Since the beginning was made with evil," the author of the *Tarikh-i-Salatin-i-Gujarat* sadly remarks, "it was followed by troubles and lamentations under the leadership of Shih Malik and Sher Malik."[1]

The leadership of this rebellion was taken by Firuz Khan, Ahmad Shah's uncle, who held Baroda from his father and decided to contest the accession as soon as he heard of the new Sultan and his method of accession.[2] During his father's lifetime, Firuz Khan appears to have been eclipsed by his elder brother, so much so that neither he nor his other brothers were considered by Muzaffar Shah to be worthy enough to succeed him. He had therefore nominated his grandson and enjoined his sons to obey him—a command which surely went against the grain of these aspirants.[3]

Not only Firuz Khan but also the Sultan's other sons, Sher Khan

[1] TSG, fol. 2/a.

[2] The personnel of the rebellion is differently given by chroniclers. In *Mirat-i-Sikandiri* the author of the rebellion is said to have been Modud Khan bin Firuz Khan, uncle's son of the Sultan. In another reliable recension he is said to be Moi-u'd-din Firuz Khan. (MS, 30-1). Ali Muhammad follows Sikandar but other writers, the authors of the *Mahmud Shahi*, *Gulshan-i-Ibrahim* and *Tabaqat-i-Akbari*, are unanimous in their statements that the leader of the rebellion was Firuz Khan, the uncle of the Sultan. (TMS, 93; GI IV, 182; TA III, 95; MA I, 46).

It appears difficult to believe that Modud, comparatively a minor figure would have been accepted as leader by the rebels while his uncles, if not his father, were alive. It is far more probable that the rebellion was led by Firuz Khan himself.

[3] MS, 30; TA III, 95; GI IV, 182.

and Sa'adat Khan, had therefore felt unhappy at their elder brother's predominance and had resented their nephew's nomination, despite his father's conduct.[1] The undoubtedly heinous crime through which Ahmad Shah came to the throne gave them a justifiable excuse to rebel against what they reasonably considered to be a tainted succession. Baroda, therefore, became the seat of the first dynastic struggle in the Sultanate of Gujarat.

The support to their claim came from a group of nobles which appear to have been dissatisfied with the clique which had put Ahmad Shah on the throne. In fact, so strong was the resentment of this group against the dominant party at Patan that they organised three revolts against Ahmad Shah, one even when they had despaired of Firuz Khan: and the hesitation betrayed by the Sultan in dealing with them indicates that their's was no mean strength on this occasion.[2]

Two other factions lent their support to the insurgent party. One was the group of Hindu followers of Muzaffar Shah who had apparently come with him from the North and who appear to have belonged to his former community; these were figures like Jiwandas Khatri and Priyagdas. It is not known what part they had played in the former reign but at this time they had prestige enough to inspire the nobles to this dangerous enterprise.[3] The other group consisted of Rajput chiefs of Gujarat to whom Firuz Khan had appealed for help—an appeal which unconsciously underlined the conflict which had persisted since the inception of Turkish rule in India, namely, the struggle between the Rajput oligarchy and the invading Turkish order with its Afghan and Indian Muslim allies.[4]

Finally, external help was sought by the rebels by inviting Hoshang Shah of Malwa, who, as the Malwa chronicler writes, had not forgotten the treatment meted out to him by his neighbour

[1] This fact is suggested though not explicitly stated both by Sikandar and the author of *Mahmud Shahi*.

[2] Sikandar gives their names as follows: Husam-u'l-mulk Bhandiri; Malik Ahmad bin Husam-u'l-mulk; Malik Shih; Badar Khatri; son of Habib-u'l-mulk mustaufi; Malik Karim Khusrau; and Priyagdas (MS, 30). In the *Mahmud Shahi*, the names are : Malik Mahmud; Hisam-u'l-mulk; three brothers, viz., Haibat Khan, Sher Khan and Sa'adat Khan, sons of Sultan Muzaffar Shah and Ahmad Shah's uncles, who joined later (TMS, 93-4). Also in TA III, 95; GI IV, 182-3.

[3] MS, 30. [4] GI IV, 182.

only an year before. To this bitter feeling was added a more mundane inducement: Firuz Khan promised to reward his ally at the rate of a *kror* of tankas for every stage on his way to Gujarat.[1] In reality, Hoshang Shah was keen to profit from the weakness of Gujarat, in exactly the same fashion in which Muzaffar Shah had attempted to exploit his weakness in the beginning of his reign.

A rather unusual proceeding seems to have taken place in the army. The *Mahmud Shahi* mentions that a handsome young man, Chirandi, was hired by the insurgents to spread disaffection in the army.[2] Evidently, the rebel leaders did not consider it sufficient to band the nobility together; they felt that inciting the army was also necessary. This is one of the few glimpses of the events taking place beneath the surface, which have been vouchsafed to us by the chroniclers.

The stronghold of the Sultanate upto this period had been the plains of northern Gujarat with Patan as its headquarters. The control exercised on central and south Gujarat was therefore comparatively weaker;[3] Firuz Khan therefore had little difficulty in assembling his forces at Baroda.

Leaving Baroda, Firuz Khan marched to Nadiad where Husamu'l-mulk Bhandiri, Malik Ahmad his son, Malik Shih, Jiwandas Khatri and Priyagdas joined him.[4] Another ally, Mahmud Turk of Cambay, invited them there and the rebels moved to secure this prize, the city which was by far the richest in Gujarat.[5]

The first opposition to the rebels was offered at this stage by two loyal Afghan chiefs, Bhikan and Adam; the rebels led by Jiwandas nevertheless came out victorious in a battle fought near Cambay.[6] Flushed with his first success, Firuz Khan assumed royal prerogatives and appointed Jiwandas as his *wazir*.[7] After establishing their control over Cambay, they turned south and reached Broach where they were joined by Firuz Khan's other brothers.[8] Evidently, the success had put heart in the rebel ranks.

Simultaneously, dissensions among the insurgent leaders also appeared. The pre-eminence granted to Jiwandas Khatri irritated most of the nobles and none of them seemed to be willing to serve

[1] MMS, fol. 299/b; TA III, 183; GI IV, 96.
[2] TMS, 94. [3] MS, 42. [4] MS, 30-1.
[5] TMS, 93-4; TA III, 96; GI IV, 182.
[6] MS, 31; GI IV, 182. [7] TA III, 95. [8] TMS, 95.

under him. Thus when he asked them to undertake the crucial attack on Patan, the nobles demurred. Jiwandas was enraged and charged them with cowardice and in the ensuing scuffle, he was killed.[1]

Jiwandas's death was a turning point in the rebellion; the fact that Firuz Khan had made him *wazir* and also that the nobles had resented his elevation was underlined by the failure of Firuz Khan to take any action to punish the offenders. Instead, he continued his march to Broach.[2]

On the other side, Ahmad Shah had been carefully feeling his way; he arrived in Broach from Patan on the I'd-u'l fitr day, i.e. Shawwal 1, 813/January 28, 1411. He sent conciliatory letters to the rebels who had in the meanwhile occupied the Broach fortress.[3] Their troops had begun to desert and, shut in the fort, they awaited the arrival of their ally Sultan Hoshang Shah.[4]

The negotiations which now commenced between the Sultan outside and the rebels within the Broach fortress, are of considerable interest, from the constitutional point of view, if it may be so called. In his communications, Ahmad Shah stressed the basis of his claim to the throne; he had been nominated as heir-apparent by his grandfather and this nomination had been accepted by the nobles and other important people of the kingdom. In addition, his enthronement too had been accepted by this group, and on this recognition, no less than on the nomination, was his claim to rule based.[5]

The argument that the acceptance by the nobles was a factor of importance comparable with the nomination by the preceding Sultan was an argument with dangerous implications, for its logical corollary was that if Firuz Khan could secure the same, he could supplant his nephew. Nevertheless, it was the recognition of a reality. Such support could become a factor of decisive importance in a struggle of this nature.

The message also urged the rebels to abjure resistance and promised amnesty to those who did. This assurance accentuated the indecision of the rebels. They conferred amongst themselves and deputed Haibat Khan, the only "real" uncle of the Sultan as

[1] MS, 31; GI IV, 183. [2] Vide footnote 3 on p. 168 and 1 above.
[3] GI IV, 183; TMS 96. [4] GI IV, 182-3.
[5] TMS, 96; TA III, 95; GI IV, 183.

their nominee to him.[1] Ahmad Shah treated him right royally and assured him of his complete forgiveness for any noble who deserted the rebels.

The rebel nobles could not resist this offer and the rebellion ended, for once, on a happy note. Even Firuz Khan was forgiven and given Navasari in *jagir* for Baroda which he formerly held. Other nobles too were allowed to retire to their respective *jagirs*.[2]

Only for Hoshang Shah was the rebellion a disappointment for he arrived in Gujarat when the trouble had ended. The Malwa chronicler paints his Sultan's achievements in vivid colours but the truth appears to be that he attempted to exploit Ahmad Shah's absence from north Gujarat by invading that area where he appeared suddenly having used unfrequented routes.[3] Ahmad Shah hastily turned towards the north from Broach and at Baroda, sent one of his chief nobles, Imad-u'l-mulk as an advance guard.

In the meanwhile, Hoshang Shah learnt of the pacification which had taken place at Broach and in the absence of this support, did not consider it worthwhile to continue the invasion. He therefore retreated to Malwa, possibly after having ravaged considerable territory.[4] Imad-u'l-mulk followed him to the border and on his return seized the Rajput *zamindars* who, with more haste than prudence, had joined the invader. These were presented before the Sultan and suitably punished.

The dates for these engagements can be gleaned only from internal evidence. Ahmad Shah reached Broach on Shawwal 1, 813/January 13, 1411; the negotiations at Broach and the diversion in north Gujarat would have therefore taken about two months, i.e. Shawwal and Z'il-qa'da 813/mid-January to mid-March 1411.

Returning from this campaign, Ahmad Shah barely had time to lay the foundations of his capital Ahmedabad, before he was called upon to deal with the revival of the same trouble, this time in north Gujarat. Now, it was supported not by the disaffected Muslim nobility but by the Rajput chiefs, especially the Raja of Idar, Ranmal.

The perennial insecurity which a relatively secure stronghold situated in inaccessible fastnesses could cause to a power based on the plains, is nowhere better illustrated than by the Rajput

[1] Real, i.e. he and Tatar Khan had the same mother.
[2] TMS, 97. [3] MMS, 299/b; TMS, 97. [4] TA III, 96; GI IV, 97.

principality of Idar situated to the north-east of Gujarat. The vicious blows inflicted by Muzaffar Shah had served to keep its ruler Ranmal quiet during his reign; the accession of Ahmad Shah and its attendant troubles which naturally weakened the Sultan's authority found Ranmal ready to exploit the same in an attempt to throw off the hated yoke.

Moreover, it was difficult for the erstwhile rebels to be completely secure while the Sultan remained doubtful of their loyalty. Mutual suspicion vitiated the formation of any permanent relations on healthy foundations.

An old associate of the former Sultan and one who had supported Firuz Khan, Malik Badr-u'la, led this insurrection.[1] Modasa, an outpost in north-east Gujarat which had the advantage of being close to Idar, was taken up as the rebel headquarters, where nobles like Fath Khan Sultani, Hasan Sultani and others assembled. Firuz Khan and his brother Haibat Khan proceeded to Idar while Rukn Khan the commandant of the Modasa fort came over to the rebels.[2]

Badr-u'la and his assistants began to provision the fort while Firuz Khan and Haibat Khan left Idar to occupy a small fortress, Rangpur, ten miles from Modasa.[3]

On hearing of the outbreak, Ahmad Shah rapidly marched towards the north-east and sent his uncle Fath Khan to attack Idar from the west, laying waste its lands. He himself approached Modasa and camped near it.[4]

As before, Ahmad Shah desired a peaceful settlement—due to the fear of God and a desire to spare the lives of the Faithful as his chronicler avers,[5] but also obviously due to the fact that he did not feel himself strong enough on his throne to meet the threat with the ruthlessness he later displayed. He sent messages to the rebel leaders which met with such a poor response that he surrounded the fort.

The conciliation was again offered during the course of the siege, amnesty being promised to those who deserted the rebel cause. This communication created differences in the rebel ranks and

[1] TA III, 98; Bayley, 93 fn. 2.
[2] TA III, 98; TMS, 99; MS, 38-9; GI IV, 183.
[3] TA III, 98; GI IV, 183; MS, 39. This place name has numerous variants in different texts, none of which are now traceable in the vicinity of Modasa.
[4] TMS, 99; MS, 39. [5] TMS, 99; MS, 39.

made Badr-u'la resort to devious means. He informed Ahmād Shah that since he and his associates had been repeatedly guilty of rebellion, they were afraid to come to him unless Malik Nizam-u'l-mulk, *naib*, Malik Sa'id-u'l-mulk, *wazir*, Mahmud Da'ud, *salahdar*, were sent to fetch them as sureties for their safe-conduct.

Ahmad Shah suspected some foul play but decided to take the risk. The nobles were sent to Modasa with a warning to be on their guard. The fears proved all too true; Badr-u'la managed to secure Nizam-u'l-mulk and Sa'id-u'l-mulk while the rest got away. However, the captured nobles managed to shout to their companions not to delay the attack on the fort on their account.[1]

The advice was taken in real earnest and the treachery spurred rather than deterred the attackers. The attack was launched at once and on the third day, the young Sultan himself led the escalade. The fort was successfully stormed and most of the rebels, including Badr-u'la and Rukn Khan, fell fighting. The captured nobles were found safe in a cellar. This took place on Jamad I. 5, 814/August 26, 1411.[2]

The news of the fall of Modasa made Firuz Khan and Raja Ranmal of Idar retreat precipitately from Rangpur to Idar. For Firuz Khan, it meant the end; even his ally turned against him. Raja Ranmal seized his guest's treasures and surrendered them to Ahmad Shah as a token of submission. However, he allowed Firuz Khan to slip away and he joined his uncle Shams Khan Dandani at Nagor.[3]

The suppression of this revolt may be said to have broken the most serious opposition to Ahmad Shah as a ruler. It did not however mean the end of internal and external troubles for him.

In the Muslim nobility, a clique still remained which was opposed to him but which seems to have refrained from showing its hand during the past rebellions but which now came out in the open. It was led by two nobles, Shih Malik and Shaikh Malik; their execution, if we are to believe Sikandar, was among the last pieces of advice given by Muzaffar Shah to his grandson.[4] To them was allied a group of nobles who were dissatisfied with the apportionment of *jagirs* and the Sultan's favours.[5]

Simultaneously, a fresh effort was being made by the Rajput chieftains to overthrow the Sultan. The threat now came from the

[1] TMS, 102-3; other chroniclers support this version. [2] MS, 39.
[3] TA III, 100; MS, 39; GI IV, 183. [4] MS, 28. MS ,41-2.

borders of Saurashtra, where Raja Satarsal, the ruler of Jhalawar, a small principality on the border between the peninsula and the mainland, was in communication with Hoshang Shah of Malwa.[1] The dissaffected group of nobles too had a link with this new alliance.[2]

It appears that Ahmad Shah was apprehensive of this alliance, for in 816/1413, he attacked Jhalawar. But he had hardly begun this campaign when he received the news of the outbreak of Shih and Shaikh Maliks' insurrection in Patan. Scattered outbreaks also took place in a number of towns for the rebels appear to have had supporters in many towns and broke up city walls and damaged a great deal of property.[3] In the meanwhile, Hoshang Shah was reported to be on the borders of Gujarat.

It was a danger serious enough but not as crucial as the two previous occasions had been. Ahmad Shah turned back from his campaign and reaching central Gujarat, camped at Pandu.[4] From here, he despatched Imad-u'l-mulk, a noble with previous experience of dealing with Hoshang Shah, against the Sultan of Malwa. Against the insurgents, he sent his younger brother Latif Khan, advised and guarded by a senior noble, Nizam-u'l-mulk, *wazir*.[5]

The moves met with immediate success. It appears that Ahmad Shah's earlier, incomplete campaign against Satarsal had frightened that ruler into abjuring his alliance with Hoshang Shah—for as soon as Imad-u'l-mulk approached him, Hoshang Shah turned back into his own country. The ostensible pretext which he gave was that he considered it below his dignity to fight a slave of Ahmad Shah—an excuse which Nizam-u'd-din dismisses as trivial and which furnishes Sikandar with an opportunity to have jibe at Hoshang Shah.[6] As before, Imad-u'l-mulk pursued him to the frontier and returned with all the *zamindars*, who had too hastily joined the invader.

Latif Khan too had little difficulty in crushing the rebellion. Shih Malik fled with his supporters as the royal army approached

[1] MS, 41-2.

[2] *Rasmala*, Gujarati translation, II, 537; *Bombay Gazetteer*, (*Kathiawar*) 422; GI IV, 184.

[3] TMS, 104-5; GI IV, 184; TA III, 100-1; MS, 41-2.

[4] Muhammad bin Tughuluq too halted at Pandu (supra 109 fn.). TA III, 101; MS, 41.

[5] TA III, 101; MS, 41.

[6] TA III, 101; MS, 41.

the former capital, so precipitately that his women folk and treasures fell into the hands of his enemies. They were pursued and compelled to fight; being routed, they fled to Ra Malag, ruler of Junagadh.[1] And with these victories, Ahmad Shah returned to his new capital, Ahmedabad.

This success marks the end of the first phase of Ahmad Shah's rule. The Sultan had no longer to depend on legal technicalities for his right to rule—that had been proved on the battle field. A new capital had been founded and thus a new atmosphere brought into being, effecting a break from the traditions of Patan; the erection of this new capital, at a much more strategic site, indicates the Sultan's awareness of his new tasks in implementing his authority in new areas and half-subjugated lands. The initial difficulties were over and the task of consolidation, the supersession of the old aristocracy, the Rajput, by the new predominantly Muslim, but with a growing leaven of Rajput-Muslim, was about to commence.

His internal troubles for the time over, Ahmad Shah considered it essential to assert his control over the peninsula. The overtures made by Satarsal of Jhalawar to his external enemies made the Sultan aware of the danger of an unsubdued rear.

The strongest ruler in Saurashtra at this time was Ra Malag, the Mandalik ruler of Junagadh. He had succeeded his brother in 1400 and had established his court in Vanthali, south-west of Junagadh; it is said that Zafar Khan during his Saurashtra campaign had driven the ruler of Junagadh to this retreat.[2] Ra Malag had however, regained his capital and expelled the Muslim *thanedar* from that place; he had besides, harboured the fugitive Shah Malik, thereby incurring the hostility of the Sultan.[3]

Ahmad Shah proceeded to Junagadh, laying the country waste as he progressed. At Vanthali, Ra Malag opposed him but was beaten;[4] most of his Rajputs were killed and he was forced to seek refuge in the fort of Junagadh which was forthwith besieged. Here too, the pressure was too great and he had to move to Uparkot only to abandon the same for Girnar.[5] In the meanwhile, he made overtures for peace, offering to acknowledge the overlordship of the Sultan and pay tribute.

[1] MS, 41. [2] *Bombay Gazetteer* (Kathiawar) 497. Supra, 148. [3] MS, 41.
[4] *Bombay Gazetteer*, (Kathiawar) 498. [5] MS, 43.

Ahmad Shah accepted the proposals and leaving two brothers, Syeds Abu'l Khair and Qasim Khan, as his deputies for collection of the *salami*, returned to Ahmedabad in Rajab 817/September-October 1414.[1]

This campaign, by no means, secured the peninsula for Ahmad Shah. It merely guarded against immediate trouble from that direction by warning the turbulent elements there of immediate retaliation. It was more an assertion of strength than an attempt at conquest.

On his return from Saurashtra, Ahmad Shah perpetrated some of those acts which have marked him to be one of the most intolerant rulers which Gujarat has ever known.

First, he marched to Sidhpore, one of the most ancient pilgrim centres of north Gujarat and studded with famous temples and laid low a number of them. No necessity demanded this wanton act of vandalism unless it was a desire for religious merit in the still unformed mind of the youthful Sultan, and a desire to expatiate for the sin of murdering his grandfather. The long valedictory poem in which Hulwi Shirazi recorded this "achievement" and which was reproduced approvingly by Sikandar, does not appear to have been an inaccurate reflection of the general satisfaction with which the official circles greeted this move.[2]

In the same year, Ahmad Shah introduced the *jiziyah* in Gujarat. It is significant that this iniquitous poll-tax was unknown to this land for nearly a century and quarter of Muslim rule. Its administration was handed to Malik Tuhfah, entitled Taj-u'l mulk, with instructions to quell turbulent non-Muslim elements and realise the *jiziyah* strictly. Consequently, he is reported to have suppressed a score of Rajput chieftains, enforced both the *salami* and the *jiziyah* on them and also secured a number of converts to Islam.[3]

Freed for the time being from the danger in his rear and having effectively restored order in his realm, Ahmad Shah was free to

[1] There does not seem to be any basis for the statement in *Mandalik kavya* that Ahmad Shah had to return discomfited from Junagadh. (*Bharatiya Vidya* XIV, 40-1 & XV, 42-3.) Nor is it justified to say that he conquered the greater part of Saurashtra. MS, 43; TA III, 102; GI IV, 184; *Bombay Gazetteer*, (Kathiawar) 497-8.

[2] MS 45-4; GI IV, 184. [3] GI IV, 184-5.

turn his attention to external events. In 819/1416-17, he led an expedition to Nagor, held by his grand-uncle, Shams Khan, with whom the erstwhile rebels Firuz Khan and others had sought shelter. The attempt however was not serious and he withdrew when the Sultan of Delhi made a feint to move in that direction for the defence of that town.[1]

More serious was the danger in the south-west. Here Nasir Khan of Khandesh, instigated by Hoshang Shah of Malwa, was planning to exploit the weakness of his neighbour.

Twenty years earlier, in 797/1395, Nasir Khan had attempted to seize the border *parganas* of Nandurbar and Sultanpur, only to be foiled by the prompt steps taken by Zafar Khan.[2] The opportunity was offered again to him in the troubles attendant on the succession of his grandson; and in the meanwhile, internal dissensions had whetted Nasir Khan's desire for additional gain. For, after the death of his father, his principality had been partitioned with the eastern and more prosperous half, with the headquarters at Asirgadh falling to Nasir Khan, while his brother Iftikhar Khan held the western half, ruling it from Thalner.[3] This compromise was not to the taste of ambitious Nasir Khan; he meant to annul his father's arrangement at the first opportunity by expelling his brother from his share. The troubles in Gujarat, from where alone Iftikhar Khan could summon help in a crisis, seemed to him therefore a God-sent opportunity; he could achieve both his ends by a single stroke—drive out his brother and recover the two parganas lost to Gujarat.

He therefore invoked the assistance of his northern neighbour Hoshang Shah, already hostile to Ahmad Shah and was joined by Ghazni Khan, Hoshang Shah's son who came to him with a force of fifteen thousand men. The joint expedition marched into Iftikhar Khan's territory and secured him; it also besieged Sultanpur, and the *muqtei*' who held it for Gujarat, sent a fast messenger to his master to apprise him of the situation.[4]

On receipt of this message informing him of this alarming development, Ahmad Shah ordered Malik Mahmud to precede him to the threatened area and himself prepared to follow him without delay. And with this danger uppermost, other hostile elements

[1] GI IV, 185. [2] Supra 147. [3] GI VI, 277.
[4] GI VI, 279. Firishtah describes these events in detail, in his section on Khandesh.

immediately came to the forefront; Raja Punja of Idar, Raja Tirbangdas of Champanir and Satarsal of Jhalawad at once took up arms and invited Hoshang Shah into Gujarat. The Sultan of Malwa wasted no time in entering Gujarat—and he also sent word to Shams Khan at Nagor, asking him to join the allies, promising to give him Patan as his share of the spoils.[1]

The coalition was undoubtedly dangerous, for this time the young Sultan had to fight on two or three "fronts". The situation was saved for him, however, first by his own alacrity and next by the curt refusal of Shams Khan to profit from the embarrassment of his nephew. Instead, he sent a fast camel rider to acquaint Ahmad Shah with the danger threatening him and assuring him of his own allegiance; the camel rider reached Sultanpur, where the Sultan was then camping, if the chroniclers are to be believed, within the incredible duration of nine days.[2]

On receipt of the news of this further development, Ahmad Shah left Malik Mahmud to relieve Sultanpur and continue the fight against Nasir Khan, and he himself marched rapidly to the north. Hoshang Shah in the meanwhile, had reached Modasa in the heart of north Gujarat plains and there, had been joined by his allies. Ahmad Shah's rapid movements appear to have, nevertheless, disconcerted him; for as the chroniclers write, on the sixth day of his march, i.e. on Rajab 16, 820/August 29, 1417, Ahmad Shah confronted his enemy in Modasa.[3] This rapid cross-country trek, at the height of the rainy season, which included passage across the swollen Narmada, besides numerous other smaller streams and rivulets, was undoubtedly a remarkable feat of the young Sultan.

Hoshang Shah had been assured by his allies that they would have time to occupy north Gujarat before Ahmad Shah could arrive there; and having been disappointed in this, the Sultan of Malwa had no heart to force the issue. He upbraided his allies for their incautious over-optimism and retreated to his kingdom without risking battle. The coalition, which had spelt so much danger, came to a futile end. The Rajput chieftains, abandoned by their chief ally, had no option but to retire to their principalities. Ahmad Shah stayed on in Modasa for some more days.[3]

This success marked the end of Ahmad Shah's struggle for his throne. It was his last defensive campaign; after it, not he but

[1] TA III, 103; GI IV, 185; MS 46. [2] TA III, 103 [3] MS 47.

his enemies were on the defensive. By a massive offensive, he compelled Hoshang Shah to abjure all interest in Gujarat, soon after; and deprived of his aid and wanting internal cohesion, the Rajput chieftains, lent themselves to easy, piece-meal reduction.

The aftermath of the precipitous retreat by Hoshang Shah, therefore, indicated the helplessness of the Rajput rebels. The ruler of Junagadh had thought it a suitable opportunity to repudiate his allegiance and refuse tribute. From Modasa, Ahmad Shah despatched Malik Ahmad Turk against him and he had no difficulty in compelling the Ra to submit to his former yoke and yield the unpaid balance of the *salami*.[1]

In the south-east, Malik Mahmud pressed his campaign with vigour. Nandot which had shown signs of trouble, was ravaged. Nasir Khan and Ghazni Khan raised their siege of Sultanpur on his approach and attempted to get away. Ghazni Khan succeeded while Nasir Khan was surrounded near Sultanpur on Z'il-hujja 1, 820/January 9, 1418.[2]

In the meanwhile, Ahmad Shah himself reached Sultanpur from Modasa. Abandoned by his allies and surrounded by his foes, Nasir Khan had little option but to appeal to his powerful enemy for terms. Malik Mahmud recommended his case to the Sultan. Nasir Khan agreed to acknowledge Ahmad Shah as overlord and peace was arranged on these terms. Nasir Khan was given his title, now with the grace of Ahmad Shah and as a special case, also allowed to use the red umbrella and canopy, though subordinate to Gujarat. As tributes, he sent elephants and horses to Ahmad Shah. With these cordial relations established, Ahmad Shah returned to his capital.

In Ahmedabad, Ahmad Shah received the envoys of the Rajput chieftains, offering allegiance and praying for forgiveness. The gesture was futile for Ahmad Shah had now made up his mind to root out these semi-independent Rajput chieftains both to gain additional land for himself and to end the ever-present source of danger. Thus began a serious attempt to eradicate from the plains of Gujarat all Rajput elements hostile to the Sultan—a feature which was accompanied with the origin of the *wanta* tenures and the Muslim-Rajput communities.[3]

[1] TA III, 103; GI IV, 186; MS, 47-8.
[2] MS, 48.
[3] TA III, 104; GI VI, 279-80.

The only ruler who did not send an emissary to Ahmedabad was the Mandalik ruler of Junagadh. Hence, Nizam-u'l-mulk the *wazir*, who was left as deputy in Ahmedabad, was instructed to look after him, as the Sultan left for Malwa.[1]

[1] TA III, 105; GI IV, 185.

Chapter XII

AHMAD SHAH: MALWA AND THE BAHMANIS

First Malwa Campaign : the battle of Ujjain—Rajput chieftains—Construction of forts in Gujarat—Second Malwa Campaign—Battle of Sarangpur—Third Malwa Campaign : Mahmud Shah Khalji—Return from Malwa—Preliminary contacts with the Bahmanides—Kanha of Jalor : his flight—Mahim and Thana: points of contact and conflict—The duel between Ahmad Shah Gujarati and Ahmad Shah Bahmani

PREPARATIONS were made for the impending offensive against Hoshang Shah, immediately after the return to Ahmedabad. In Safar 821/February-March 1418, the Sultan left his *wazir*, Zia-u'd-din entitled Nizam-u'l-mulk in the capital, asking him to keep a look-out for the Mandalik ruler of Junagadh and marched to Malwa despite unusual heat and the bad condition of roads, presumably by the Champanir route. The objective this time was not the capital of Malwa, Mandu, but its most prosperous pilgrim centre, Ujjain.

Reaching the outskirts of the town, Ahmad Shah encamped, by the side of the Kalia-dah tank, protecting his army by constructing earthern buttresses.[1] Hoshang Shah had also assembled his forces here and the armies prepared for a sharp trial of strength.

The battle was a bitter and hard-fought one and Ahmad Shah would have been worsted had it not been for the timely appearance of one of his nobles. This noble, Malik Farid, was called to the ranks when the army was proceeding but, being busy in his toilet, was delayed: Ahmad Shah himself passed by his encampment, asking him to hurry up, and conferring on him there and then the title held by his father, Imad-u'l-mulk.

Hastily completing his toilet, Imad-u'l-mulk followed his father, but when he arrived, the armies had already engaged and the Gujarat army was having the worst of the bargain. Having come by

[1] The Malwa chronicler, al-Kirmani, omits the two invasions of Malwa by Ahmad Shah completely. Hence the main sources of information are *Tabqat-i-Akbari*, *Gulshan-i-Ibrahimi* and *Mirat-i-Sikandiri*. TA III, 105; GI IV, 185.

a different route, the noble found himself in the rear of the Malwa army; seeing in this an advantage, he signified his arrival by attacking the enemy at that vulnerable spot. This timely aid turned the tables in favour of Ahmad Shah; the Malwa force broke up in disorder and panic and though Hoshang Shah made every effort to rally his men, it was of no avail and he had to fly to his hill capital of Mandu. The Gujarat army pursued the fugitives upto the gates of Mandu. Casualties were heavy on either side for the earlier phase of the battle had gone against the Gujarat army.[1]

The booty left by the Malwa army on the battlefield was immense. Ahmad Shah, elated by the success, intended to follow it by laying siege to Mandu. His counsellors advised against this, for the rainy season was at hand and the army had been sorely tried by the recent battle. Thus in Jamad I-II, 821/June-July 1418, Ahmad Shah returned by the Champanir-Nandot way, ravaging these lands as he passed through them. Back in the capital, he munificently rewarded those who had distinguished themselves in the campaign.[2]

Ahmad Shah resumed his offensive as the campaigning season opened, considering it necessary to preface his invasion by a show of strength against his internal adversaries, the Rajput chieftains.

On Z'il-qa'ada 1, 821/November 30, 1418, he moved against Raja Narsingh Das of Champanir. The fort was too massive to be attempted : hence the environs of the fort were ravaged and Ahmad Shah left the fort on Safar 1, 822/February 27, 1419 after accepting the submissions of the ruler and fixing the *salami* due from him.[3]

The Sultan penetrated deeply into the hilly area and in a favourable spot Sankherah, which he reached on Safar 22, 819/March 20, 1419 he laid the foundations of a mosque and a fort.[4]

Leaving Sankherah Ahmad Shah reached an outpost on the Malwa-Gujarat frontier, Mankani : here he arrived on Rabi I, II, 822/April 7, 1419 and the foundations of a small fortress, housing a frontier garrison, were laid.[5] Leaving this place, next day, Ahmad Shah began his march to Dhar, near Mandu.

[1] MS, 48-49; TA III 105 & 294; GI IV 185-6 &V 236.
[2] TA III, 106-7: GI IV, 186.
[3] MS, 49-50; TA III, 107. [4] TA III, 107.
[5] TA III, 107. This place is given by chroniclers as Rankali. See *Gazetteer* of the Baroda State, II, 521-2.

Before proceeding far, however, he was waited upon by the envoys sent by Hoshang Shah who expressed their master's regret for his past "misdeeds" and his unwillingness to continue the mutual struggle. This conciliatory attitude was prompted by Hoshang Shah's feeling of weakness in the face of his enemy's superior strength; he wished to go south in search of elephants to reinforce his army. Nevertheless, Ahmad Shah's counsellors like Nizam-u'l-mulk, *naib-wazir* Mahmud Barqi, advised him to accept the pacific overtures which amounted to a prestige victory though not an actual one. Ahmad Shah acquiesced and the army turned back towards Gujarat having thus achieved a moral victory over Malwa.[1]

On its return journey, the army halted once again at Champanir on Rabi II 6, 822/May 2, 1419. The usual attack on the fort was made and the area laid waste. Finally the army reached the capital by the end of Rabi II. 822/end of May 1419, as the rains were approaching.

During the course of the next year, 823/1423-4, Ahmad Shah remained busy in strengthening the internal police and defence mechanism of his kingdom. Forts were built in difficult areas for policing it more efficiently while the disadvantages of truculence were brought home to the disaffected by razing their temples and constructing mosques. Garrisons were posted. For the first time, the influence of the Muslim Sultan began to be seriously felt in the mountainous and difficult 'refuge' zones which had hitherto managed to defy his authority.

Thus in the districts of Balasinor and in other places round about the eastern border adjoining Malwa, bastions were built and garrisoned. Old forts were repaired and strengthened.[2]

With relative security achieved, Ahmad Shah once again resumed his offensive against Malwa in the end of 824/December 1421. The immediate reason for this offensive was the report that Hoshang Shah had left Malwa to go to Jajnagar (Orissa) to secure elephants for his army.[3] These elephants were meant to give Hoshang Shah

[1] MS, 51-2; TA III, 107. [2] MS, 52; TA III, 108-9.

[3] TA III, 109. The fact that Ahmad Shah left Gujarat on being apprised of the absence of the Sultan of Malwa is also supported by Firishtah and Nizam-u'd-din in their sections on Malwa, where they write that Hoshang Shah was informed of the invasion of Malwa during his *return* from Jajnagar (III, 296; V, 236). It is evident therefore that Hoshang Shah did not leave his capital while it was invested, nor did he leave Malwa while Ahmad Shah was at Maheshwar, as Sikandar appears to believe. (MS, 52.).

a superiority in strength over his rival Ahmad Shah.

Before he actually started on the campaign against Malwa, Ahmad Shah had been engaged in his war, against the border Rajput principalities. He left his capital by the end of 824/December 1421. Champanir was besieged and tribute exacted from the ruler. From here Ahmad Shah left for Sankherah on Safar 19, 825/February 12, 1422 reaching it three days later. In this place, foundations of another and a bigger congregational mosque were laid.[1]

It was here that definite news was received of Hoshang Shah's departure for Jajnagar, and Ahmad Shah made up his mind to exploit the opportunity. This time, he did not march direct to Mandu, but taking a more difficult southern route, advanced to Maheshwar, a flourishing pilgrim centre on the Narmada situated on the border between Malwa and Khandesh. The defenders despaired of relief and surrendered the fort to the invader.

Ahmad Shah entrusted the captured citadel to his officers and proceeded to Mandu, reaching it on Rabi II 25, 825/April 5, 1422.[2] The fort was duly invested; moreover, detachments were sent out to bring Malwa within the control of the Gujarat Sultan. The defenders of Mandu held out tenaciously hoping for an early return of their master, while most of the countryside passed outside their control. Ahmad Shah appointed his nobles to different places—Malik Mukhlis was sent to Dipalpur, Kaitha was entrusted to Malik Farid Imad-u'l-mulk, and Mahindarpur, well-known in Nizam-u'd-din's time, to Malik Iftikhar.[3]

The siege continued for forty days with fierce clashes and sorties when the advent of rains compelled Ahmad Shah to seek a better spot for encampment.[4] On Jamad II, 1, 824/May 24, 1422, he left Mandu for Ujjain where he remained during the monsoon.

As clear weather returned, on Ramzan 20, 825/September 7, 1422, the siege was resumed. Reinforcements were summoned from Gujarat; Malik Ahmad Ayyaz reached the investors with large treasures on Shawwal 12, 825/ September 29, 1422 and was entrusted with the garrison attacking the Tarapore gate.[5]

In the meanwhile, Hoshang Shah reached Malwa with a large herd of elephants; and, despite the vigilance of the investors suc-

[1] Ta III, 108; MS, 52. *Tabaqat* gives most of the dates.
[2] TA III, 109. [3] TA III, 109; MS, 52; GI IV, 186.
[4] MS, 53. [5] TA III, 110; MS, 53; GI IV, 186.

ceeded in entering his capital by the Tarapore gate. The return of their Sultan infused new spirit into the defenders. Ahmad Shah also was convinced that the capture of a fort as massive and as gifted with natural defences as the capital of Malwa, was if not an impossibility, at least an extremely protracted business.

He therefore adopted a different strategy : either to compel Hoshang Shah to come out and give battle or to isolate him in his mountain fastness. He therefore left off the siege and withdrew to Sarangpur, in the heart of Malwa.

As Ahmad Shah besieged Sarangpur, Hoshang Shah approached it by a different route. He had also determined on a plan : that it envisaged a pre-meditated breach of faith is testified by almost every chronicler. The absence of al-Kirmani's account is felt at this juncture, for he could have presented the other side of the picture.

As on the previous occasion, he sent envoys to wait on Ahmad Shah, pleading for cessation of hostilities. The plea contained according to Sikandar, an argument likely to touch a person not indifferent to his religion like Ahmad Shah, namely, that it was strange that due to a single fault of his (Hoshang Shah's), Ahmad Shah was ravaging the territory of a fellow-Muslim sovereign; and if the "line of remission was drawn across the catalogue of his faults," he (Hoshang Shah) would mend his ways and abide faithfully by his commitments. It was therefore desirable that Ahmad Shah returned to his capital and desisted from any further activities.[1]

This appeal, the choniclers aver, was nothing but a blind by which Hoshang Shah hoped to put his enemy off-guard and thus vulnerable to his surprise attack. Ahmad Shah succumbed to this stratagem, influenced by his advisers. The army was ordered as in the earlier case, to prepare for the return, and naturally, the defence precautions and guards became less vigilant.[2]

This situation was the one which Hoshang Shah had planned for. On Muharram 12, 826/December 26, 1422 he delivered a totally unexpected night-attack on the unprepared and virtually defenceless Gujarat army. The chaos and hubbub which followed can best be described in Sikandar's own words :

"...just when Sultan Ahmad had decided on peace, Sultan Hoshang treacherously made a night-attack on him when he was thrown off

[1] MS. 53. [2] MS, 54; TA III, 110; GI IV, 186-7.

his guard against all deceit and perfidy. Suddenly a great outcry arose in the camp, and the silence of the night was disturbed by a tumult. Some thought the Day of Judgement had come, others thought a furious elephant had broken loose. At last, it became known that it was the noise of a night attack by the enemy. Malik Munir awoke Sultan Ahmad, who armed himself and came out of his tent. There were two horses there belonging to the horsemen on duty. The Sultan mounted one and his equerry Malik Jaunan mounted the other and they rode out to the verge of the camp. The forces of Sultan Hoshang fell first upon Samant Rajput *girasiah* of the district of Dandah, who held the advanced post, and he with five hundred Rajputs, was killed. The enemy pressed forward and many of Sultan Ahmad's men were killed...."[1]

Ahmad Shah summoned Malik Farid and Malik Muqarrab to his presence and rebuked them sharply for their negligence. By now, the Malwa force had presumed their enemy beaten and while Sultan Hoshang was inspecting the elephants and horses which he considered as spoils, most of the soldiers were engaged in looting. Ahmad Sultan and the two nobles succeeded in gathering a thousand men each, and with them, they fell on the enemy.

"Just then the day dawned, and Sultan Ahmad cried, 'Now, my brave fellows, now is the time to play the man!' With a thousand men, each of whom was as brave as a lion, he advanced, and when Shah Hoshang's army came in sight, they brandished their swords and charged, shouting, 'Allah! Allah!' Each of the two kings, with his two-handed sword, fought for his honour and for his dignity with the greatest fury imaginable, till they were both wounded. When it was day light, the eyes of the elephant drivers of Ahmad Shah fell upon their sovereign; they formed a line with their elephants and charged the enemy. Hoshang, unable to withstand them, took to flight and the victory remained with Sultan Ahmad."[2]

The tables were thus turned and the Malwa soldiers fled abandoning the booty which they had prematurely considered theirs. Sultan Hoshang was compelled to seek shelter in the fort of Sarangpur. The ruse had won him nothing but ignominy.

Ahmad Shah's victory too was by no means a decisive one, a success which could enable him to follow it up by establishing his control over Malwa. In fact, he had barely escaped a serious

[1] Bayley, 107-8.

[2] Bayley, 109. These descriptions are almost the same in every chronicle.

disaster; even then, the loss of blood had been heavy and he was in no position to stay in an enemy country. He had to acknowledge that so far as the conquest of Malwa was concerned his campaign had been a failure : yet Hoshang Shah had been taught a lesson which could not be easily forgotten.

Thus Ahmad Shah prepared to return to his land and on Rabi I. 24, 826/March 7, 1423, left Sarangpur for Gujarat. Hoshang Shah, who had apparently watched his enemy's activities with care thought it a propitious time to engage : he assembled his forces, pursued the enemy and attacked. Ahmad Shah too turned and faced the foe. The battle was sharp and casualties were high. Hoshang Shah was again defeated and had to flee leaving four thousand of his men dead and a number of elephants which he had brought from Jajnagar, in the hands of the enemy.[1]

Sultan Ahmad remained for the night on the battlefield and, as the day dawned, continued his march to Gujarat, reaching Ahmedabad on Jamad II 4, 826/May 13, 1423. He had bled so heavily in this campaign that for three years he did not undertake any other; he remained in his capital, organising his administration and refurbishing and resting his army.

Ahmad Shah's attention was drawn towards Malwa after this campaign, only towards the end of his reign. The invasion of Malwa which he undertook in Ramzan 841/February-March 1438, was in many respects analogous to Hoshang Shah's invasion of Gujarat at the beginning of his own (Ahmad Shah's) reign.

The legitimist pretext prompting this attack was the dynastic revolution which had occurred in Malwa, displacing the Ghorides and placing Mahmud Shah, the first of the Khaljis of Malwa, and the most remarkable of all Malwa Sultans, on the throne of Mandu. Mahmud Shah won the throne not only because of his own remarkable military talents and the help of his father Malik Mughith who was bestowed the title of Khan Jahan later on, but also because of the chronic feud persisting between the sons of Hoshang Shah which incapacitated them for effective rule.[2] Ghazni Khan who ruled Malwa for the brief duration of an year as Muhammad

[1] MS, 56; TA III, 112; GI IV, 187.

[2] This conflict is described in detail in al-Kirmani's history as well as in *Tabaqat-i-Akbari* and *Gulshan-i-Ibrahimi*.

Shah, was poisoned by Mahmud Khan, his *wazir*, who then seized the throne with the title of Mahmud Shah.

The consequence of this *coup* was the break-up of the homogeneity established by Hoshang Shah. Every noble became more or less independent in his charge and waited to see as to who came out successful in the scramble. Two of Hoshang Shah's sons, Masud Khan and 'Umar Khan, fled to Gujarat, and while the former stayed with Ahmad Shah, the latter passed on to the northern frontiers of Malwa to reappear later in Chanderi. Ahmad Shah espoused the cause of Masud Khan and in Ramzan 841/February-March 1438, led an army into Malwa.[1]

The movements in the course of this offensive appear to have been very much similar to the earlier one. Ahmad Shah marched to Mandu, the Malwa capital, laying waste the areas in his route.[2] Arriving in the vicinity of the capital, he encamped on the bank of a tank in Jaisinghpore, where he learnt that Malik Mughith A'zam Humayun, Mahmud Shah's father who had been suppressing rebels in the east, had returned hastily on hearing of his approach and entered Mandu.[3] He therefore sent Masud Khan with a contingent and twenty-four elephants to begin the siege, while for the main body of troops, he constructed a protected camping-ground capable of warding off any surprise night attack, at Jaisinghpore.

Sultan Mahmud Shah was heartened by the arrival of his father: skirmishes commenced as the besiegers and the besieged came in contact. Parties descended from the fort and engaged the enemy, retiring into it after a short engagement. A night attack was also delivered which caused considerable damage to the besiegers. Mahmud Shah also attempted to win over those Malwa nobles who had gone over to Ahmad Shah by promising them rewards and *jagirs*: many former nobles like Sufi Khan, Malik Muhammad and others left Ahmad Shah and joined him.[4]

The siege, however, continued and though, Mahmud Shah had provisioned the city well and at the first signs of scarcity opened *langarkhanas* which catered to the *faqirs* and the poor men of the city, the pinch began to be felt. Moreover, Ahmad Shah, as on the previous occasion, attempted to establish his authority in Malwa; army detachments and officials were sent to different parts to bring the area under undisputed control of the Sultan of

[1] MMS, 258 d-259 a. [2] MMS, 258a.
[3] MMS, 258a; TA III, 316; GI IV, 244. [4] MMS, 255b; TA III, 316.

Gujarat.[1] A cordon round the city of Mandu blockading all its exits and entrances was strictly maintained.

As the siege dragged on the conviction grew on Mahmud Shah that being cooped up in the fort of Mandu would be in the long run ruinous to his cause; the fortified cities were under the control of the nobles who had not acknowledged him and the country-side appeared to fall to the invaders. Ahmad Shah at this juncture made an attempt to reduce other forts also and sent his son Muhammad Khan against Sarangpur; it may be noticed that, in the course of the earlier siege also, Ahmad Shah and, following him Hoshang Shah, had repaired to Sarangpur.[2]

In the meanwhile another danger arose for the Malwa Sultan from the north-east. 'Umar Khan, another son of Hoshang Shah, appeared in Chanderi; the garrison and the nobles in that place rose in his favour and killing Haji, the *shiqdar* of that place, proclaimed Umar Khan as their leader.[3]

Mahmud Shah, therefore, decided to leave his beleaguered capital. Leaving his father Khan Jahan in charge of its defence, he left the fort and proceeded to Sarangpur.[4] Two nobles, Taj Khan and Mansur Khan preceded him and clashed with Haji Khan whom Ahmad Shah had posted to block the roads. After a sharp encounter, the Malwa nobles were victorious and Haji Khan fleeing from the battlefield carried the news of Mahmud Shah's departure to his master. Mahmud Shah, jubilant at this initial success, proceeded to Sarangpur. By this time the year had changed to 842/June 1438-May-June 1439.[5]

This courageous act had immediate consequences. First, the *muqtei'* of Sarangpur, Malik Ishaq bin Qutb-u'l-mulk, immediately submitted to Mahmud Shah conveying to him that while Muhammad Khan had been recalled by his father to Ujjain, it was likely that 'Umar Khan would attack from the north-east. Secondly, Ahmad Shah moved to Ujjain and called his son back with the intention of timing his attack on Mahmud Shah when he was

[1] MMS, 259a. [2] Supra 184; TA III, 316; GI V, 245.
[3] MMS, 255b; TA III, 317-8: GI V, 244.
[4] al-Kirmani writes that Mahmud Shah proceeded—at least for some distance—towards Ahmedabad to destroy that city (255b). This is not mentioned by other chroniclers and appears to be unlikely.
[5] MMS, 255b-254a; TA III, 317-8; GI IV, 245.

engaged with 'Umar Khan—thus crushing him in a pincer.[1]

Mahmud Shah sent Taj Khan in advance to Malik Ishaq in Sarangpur and followed him, receiving in Sarangpur the allegiance of the Malik and the townsmen there and bestowing on them the usual robes and rewards. He then prepared to march against 'Umar Khan, who was moving towards Sarangpur after having looted and burnt Bhilsah.[2]

The story of this conflict between 'Umar Khan and Mahmud Shah can be only very briefly sketched here, though, al-Kirmani has what Sikandar would have called, 'wasted a great deal of eloquence over it.'[3] In the encounter which took place between the two armies, 'Umar Khan was decisively beaten; disdaining to flee before a servitor of his house, he continued the fight and was captured. Mahmud Shah ordered him to be executed and his head was displayed on a spear in the battlefield. This fatal proof of the futility of their effort compelled the nobles of Chanderi to ask for truce; during the night, however, they retreated to their fort and selecting another person, seated him on the throne as Ahmad Shah. Mahmud Shah despatched a force to deal with these nobles and himself turned towards Ahmad Shah.[4]

No definite liaison appears to have existed between these two armies, nor does there appear to have been any understanding between them. Ahmad Shah had however resolved to exploit his adversary's difficulties, and as Sultan Mahmud prepared to engage with 'Umar Khan, he also moved towards the east from Ujjain.

At this time, however, the Gujarat army was struck by a particularly virulent form of epidemic plague, so killing that soldiers "had no time to dig graves." Within two days, several thousand people perished.[5] This scourge undid the plans of the Sultan of

[1] MMS, 254b-253a; TA III, 319.

[2] Al-Kirmani gives a long and rambling account of the activities of 'Umar Khan, interspersed with veledictory passages (253b-250a). TA III, 318-20; GI V, 245.

[3] MMS, 253b-250a. [4] Vide footnote 2 above.

[5] Bayley thinks that it was a virulent form of cholera. *Ta'un*, the word used by Nizam-u'd-din definitely indicates plague, not cholera, for which the term *haiza* is used. In his section Gujarat, and in other writers like Firishtah, the word *waba* or epidemic is used and thus it is left uncertain; but t is not possible to ignore Nizam-u'd-din's use of the word 'plague'. It is noticeable that the Malwa chronicler, al-Kirmani, does not mention the scourge: according to him it was Mahmud Shah's victory over 'Umar Khan that instilled terror in Ahmad Shah's heart and compelled him to retreat to Gujarat. TA III, 320 & 124; GI IV, 190 & 246; MMS, 248b.

Gujarat and he was compelled to recognise that the star of Mahmūd Shah of Malwa was on the ascendant. He therefore promised his protégé Masud Khan that he would return some time later and restore to him his patrimony, a promise which he was unable to keep.[1]

This was the last campaign undertaken by Ahmad Shah—for soon after returning to Ahmedabad, he passed away.

With Ahmad Shah commenced also the relationship of Gujarat with the Bahmani Sultanate towards its south-east.

The rise of the Bahmani kingdom preceded the independence of Gujarat by nearly half a century; it was in Patan that Muhammad bin Tughuluq was informed of this secession, the first of the many that were to come. The new kingdom embraced the northern half of the peninsula, the Krishna-Tungbhadra divide forming its frontier with Vijayanagara. Needless to say, the two kingdoms were virtually always in conflict.

Firuz Shah Bahmani (800/1397-825/1422), the Sultan during whose reign independent Gujarat came into existence, maintained on the whole friendly relations with the new power. It was the struggle with Vijayanagar which claimed his entire attention—and though he was a promising ruler when he came to the throne, both his ability and will were sapped by debauchery and intrigue. In his last campaign, he failed to subdue even the rebels within his kingdom and had to appeal to Ahmad Shah of Gujarat for help. The Sultan of Gujarat obliged but before this force could reach the scene, the picture had altered completely. Ahmad Khan Wali, the brother whom Firuz Shah had atempted to blind, not only frustrated him but successfully seized the crown from his failing hands; on Shawwal 5, 825/September 22, 1422, Firuz Shah was made to abdicate in his brother's favour; on Shawwal 15/October 22, he breathed his last.[2]

This *coup* shifted the diplomatic balance amongst the four Muslim states, Khandesh, Gujarat, Malwa and the Bahmani kingdom. Ahmad Shah viewed his brother's allies as enemies and was considered

[1] TA III 124 & 320; GI IV 190 & V 245.

[2] GI, I, 317-9: TA III, 18-9. Firishtah writes that as Ahmad Shah was new to the throne, he was unable to help his friends. This is denied both by Sikandar and Nizam-u'd-din. Moreover, in 824-5/1421-22, Ahmad Shah had been on the throne for over a decade. TA III, 18: MS, 59.

an usurper by them. Besides, he harboured the ambition of conquering these states, which he fancied had been bestowed on his brother by Timur.[1]

The upsurge of this hostility therefore, between the Bahmanides and Gujarat succeeded the conflict which had ended with the crushing defeat inflicted on Hoshang Shah. Particularly, was this new shift welcome to Nasir Khan of Khandesh; he had never forgiven Hoshang Shah for leaving him in the lurch and had chafed at the subjugation though nominal which Gujarat had imposed upon him.[2] With eagerness, therefore, he welcomed the offer extended by Ahmad Shah Bahmani for the alliance of his daughter with his son. By this alliance, he hoped to get even with Ahmad Shah of Gujarat.[3]

In the meanwhile, Ahmad Shah Bahmani had had a round with Hoshang Shah of Malwa over a border fort, Kheralu.[4] The time appeared almost ripe when several incidents precipitated the duel with Gujarat.

The force which Ahmad Shah Gujarati had sent to his fellow monarch's aid had been politely sent back with suitable presents.[5] After that the relations between the two rulers had been cool rather than cordial. Ahmad Shah Bahmani had moreover taken the precaution of strengthening his frontier with Gujarat.[6]

In 833/1429-30, suppressed hostility gave way to open war. Rai Kanha, a scion of the ruling house of Jalor, either incurred or fancied that he had incurred the anger of the Sultan of Gujarat. Probably, a minor foray had occasioned this feeling.[7] He there-

[1] GI I, 312. [2] *Supra* 178. [3] GI I, 327-8 & V, 280. [4] GI I, 322.

[5] MS, 59. Sikandar places this event wrongly in 835/1431-32. It precedes a long *lacunae* in Sikandar's narrative and only a brief paragraph summarises the subsequent reign of Ahmad Shah.

[6] GI I, 320.

[7] It is difficult to identify this figure. He did not belong to Jhalawar; neither the *Rasmala* nor any other historical account of that dynasty, mention a name such as this. In them Satarsalji is said to have been succeeded by his son Jetsinghji in 1420; the latter ruled till 1441, constantly at war with Ahmad Shah. Vanvirji succeeded him and ruled till 1461, probably after having made his peace with the Sultan.

Satarsalji's *second* son went to Hoshang Shah of Malwa and founded the line of the Jhalas of Narwar. His name was Raghuvirsinhji and he could not be confounded with Rai Kanha *Bombay Gazetteer* (Kathiawar), 422.

It seems therefore that Rai Kanha did not come from Jhalawar but from

fore fled from Gujarat to Nasir Khan of Khandesh. Nasir Khan felt it too dangerous to offer him asylum; he accepted an aged elephant from his guest and sent him on to Ahmad Shah Bahmani.[1]

The Bahmani Sultan exceeded the bounds of hospitality by not only welcoming his guest but providing him with a small force with which to raid the border parganas of Nandurbar and Sultanpur. Kanha carried out this commission only too zealously, so much so that his activities were reported to the Sultan of Gujarat.

Ahmad Shah might have overlooked asylum being granted to Rai Kanha, though this is doubtful; he could not ignore the second, which was adding insult to injury. Muhammad Khan, the heir-apparent, was immediately deputed with distinguished nobles and a powerful army to proceed to the affected parts and crush the intruder.

The first battle between the two armies took place at a narrow defile, Manik burj, through which the way from Khandesh to the Deccan, passed.[2] The small force could not stand the weight of the powerful Gujarat army and had to retreat into their territory, into which they were followed by Muhammad Khan. Ahmad Shah Bahmani, on being informed of this development, sent his own son and heir-apparent 'Ala-u'd-din Khan, and in addition another son and a prominent noble Qadir Khan, in command of a large army, to check the intruders.

By the time the reinforcements arrived, the fleeing force and the pursuing army had reached Daulatabad. Here Nasir Khan too joined his son-in-law, thus coming out in the open. Several sharp engagements took place without yielding any result; in one of the sharpest encounters, however, the Bahmani leaders were worsted, Qadir Khan being unhorsed and wounded, 'Ala-u'd-din Khan being compelled to seek the shelter of the fort and Nasir Khan having had to go back to his own citadel of Asirgadh.

Muhammad Khan invested the massive fortress but soon realised that the reduction of the near-impregnable stronghold was wholly

Jalor, over which the Sultans of Gujarat claimed a shadowy suzerainty. A Kanha is mentioned in the genealogy of this house, fifth in descent after Kanhad-de, the hero of the struggle against 'Ala-u'd-din (*Khyat* I. 166). Lack of any information inhabits any further identification but this person *could* have been the one referred to by Persian chroniclers.

[1] GI IV, 188; TA III, 118-9.

[2] Probably one of the passes which leads from western Khandesh to the Deccan. The eastern passes were controlled by Khandesh, a principality which was not immediately affected by this campaign. *Bombay Gazetteer* (Khandesh), 207-9.

beyond his ken. He therefore left off, ravaged the surrounding territory and returned to take up a strong position in Nandurbar. From here, he sent word to his father and was directed to stay there.[1]

While these events were taking place in Khandesh, other incidents occurred on the sea-coast to vitiate further the relations between the two states.

Ahmad Shah Bahmani had appointed one of the nobles who had helped him to come to the throne, Khalaf Hasan, Malik-u't-tujjar to quell the disturbances which had taken place in Konkan. This noble, an Arab and by title a merchant, carried out his commission; in addition, he occupied Mahim, taking advantage of the death of Rai Qutb who had held it for the Sultan of Gujarat.[2]

Mahim, now in Bombay, was to play an important part later when the Portuguese came to these parts; at this time too, as in their days, it formed the southernmost outpost of Gujarat. Its loss was therefore reported to Ahmad Shah Gujarati by the dispossessed heirs. By him, it was interpreted as a deliberate violation of Gujarat territory.

While it is difficult to determine the precise relationship which existed between Rai Qutb and Ahmad Shah, it seems clear that the chief of Mahim paid tribute to Gujarat thereby acknowledging the overlordship of that Sultan and had received the confirmation of his charge from him.[3] Malik-u't-tujjar's action therefore constituted yet another breach in the already distraught situation.

On receipt of this news, Ahmad Shah prepared to retrieve Mahim. The long coastline of Gujarat was especially valuable on this occasion. Zafar Khan, his son, was ordered to proceed by land with a large army and distinguished nobles as advisers; Mukhlis-u'l-mulk, the *kotwal* of Div, Gujarat's major naval base was commissioned to prepare a large armada and dispatch it to the aid

[1] GI IV, 188; TA III, 118-9.

[2] Firishtah in his section on Gujarat, writes that this noble was despatched when Ahmad Shah Bahmani, smarting at the reverses suffered by him, heard of the death of Rai Qutb. In his section on the Bahmanides, he writes, that Malik-u't-tujjar was appointed to Konkan and took the initiative on his own account. Alfi supports Firishtah. Both of them contradict Nizam-u'd-din's version that Rai Qutb was alive when the attack took place. GI I, 327 & IV, 188; TA III, 117; Bayley, 116 fn.

[3] Bayley, 116 fn.

of the force advancing by land. Mukhlis-u'l-mulk scoured the ports of Somnath-Patan, Div, Gogha and Cambay for vessels and collected nearly seven hundred. After equipping them properly, he sailed to the help of Zafar Khan. The Prince's advisers counselled him to ask the fleet to proceed to Thana and blockade it, while they advanced to that post by land.[1] These events took place in 833/1429-30.

Unlike Mahim which had been subject to Gujarat, Thana seems to have been a Bahmani outpost and the headquarters of the Bahmani army in these parts, although Malik-u't-tujjar himself was in Mahim. Zafar Khan ordered his nobles to blockade it by land while the naval force acted likewise by sea. The defenders made great efforts to break the siege but without any results. Zafar Khan himself joined the besieging force and at last the defending commandant left his son to continue the defence while he escaped outside, probably to solicit help from his master.[2]

Thana was thus rendered innocuous. Zafar Khan then proceeded to invest the island of Mahim. Here, Malik-u't-tujjar had made adequate preparations for defence. By felling heavy trees across the narrow channel, he had barricaded himself in the island. In addition, he had rushed an appeal to his master for reinforcements.

The Gujarat army laid siege to Mahim, as the relieving force led by the Bahmani Sultan's younger son, Muhammad Khan, approached the beleaguered outpost. Malik-u't-tujjar waited on the Prince and after long deliberations, it was decided to relieve Thana first. But before this plan could be carried out, for tides made immediate action impossible, the jealousy of Bahmani nobles against Malik-u't-tujjar, asserted itself. They complained to Muhammad Khan that while the fighting was done by them, the credit for the success was taken by Malik-u't-tujjar—and so would be the case in this campaign too. The Prince proved an easy victim; without making any effort, he withdrew towards the interior leaving Malik-u't- tujjar to his fate.[3]

[1] TA III, 117-8; GI IV, 188.

[2] TMS, 141; TA III, 118; GI IV, 188. The version in *Mahmud Shahi* is very similar to that in Firishtah.

[3] TA III, 118-9; GI I, 327 & IV, 188; TMS, 141. At one place, Nizam-u'd-din writes that Khan Jahan was the title of the younger brother. In his section on the Bahmanides, Firishtah writes that the sea-air made Muhammad Khan sick and therefore he withdrew.

This favourable opportunity was suitably exploited by the investing Gujarat force. A furious attack was launched; Malik-u't-tujjar fought valiantly and lost many followers, including his brother. Finally, he abandoned the unequal struggle, and fled to his master, at Jalnah.

A number of Bahmani soldiers, fell in the victor's hands, as they tried to escape by sea. The spoils were immense; loaded vessels went off to the ports of Gujarat. Zafar Khan returned victorious to his father and the newly conquered territory was divided amongst the nobles.[1] Later, Rai Qutb's daughter was married to Fath Khan, one of Ahmad Shah's sons, which indicates that his patrimony had been restored to his heirs who had drawn the attention of the Sultan to this frontier outpost.[2]

This incident indicates that the *de jure* control of the Sultans of Gujarat, from the time of Ahmad Shah, extended as far south as Mahim. The actual place was a bone of contention between the Sultans of Gujarat and their Bahmani counterparts, but not after this victory. After all, Mahim was not then as important as it became later with the arrival of the Portuguese and the English —and much of the area was sparsely inhabited and poorly controlled.

These two successive reverses exasperated the Bahmani Sultan greatly, all the more so because they affected his prestige, always a vulnerable spot for an independent ruler.[3] He therefore thought of getting compensation by attacking the principality of Baglanah, situated in the south-eastern extremity of Gujarat and ravaging the frontier parganas of Sultanpur and Nandurbar. In 835/1431-2, he attacked Gujarat territory in this sector.

Muhammad Khan had been staying in Nandurbar since his earlier expedition to the south-east. At this time, not only was he feeling restive owing to his long exile from the capital but his force was also sadly depleted, many *amirs* having returned to their homes. Not having a force sufficiently strong to repulse the invaders, he communicated to his father, emphasising the strength of the invaders and his own inability to meet them.[4]

[1] TA III, 122. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] TA III, 121; GI IV, 189; Bayley, 119. "The army of Gujarat," declared Ahmad Shah Bahmani to his soldiers, "has now on several occasions overcome that of Deccan and has taken possession of Mahim. If I now show any hesitation or weakness, the kingdom of Deccan will pass out of my hands."

[4] TA III, 120; GI I, 327 & IV, 189; TMS, 146.

Ahmad Shah had been at this time contemplating a renewal of the offensive against Champanir and had marched some distance towards that fort. The receipt of these tidings made him change his plans accordingly and he speedily advanced towards the south-east, not forgetting to ravage the Rajput principality of Nandot, *en route*. He reached Nandurbar, the headquarters of his son, made the usual gifts and honoured him and his lieutenants.

In Nandurbar, it was reported that Ahmad Shah Bahmani had been investing the fort of Batnol on the Deccan-Gujarat border but on hearing of Sultan Ahmad's prompt arrival, had withdrawn promptly into his territory.[1] This withdrawal was agreeable to Ahmad Shah for he had no wish to provoke hostilities; he therefore started on the return march to Ahmedabad.[2]

However, as soon as Ahmad Shah had crossed the Tapti, news arrived that Ahmad Shah Bahmani had resumed his hostile activity and reinvested Batnol which was being defended valiantly by Sa'adat Sultani. What made the Bahmani Sultan change his mind, is not very clear; probably, a point of prestige, that his retreat in face of an advancing enemy would be interpreted in unfavourable terms, made him renew the offensive. He could possibly have calculated that once Ahmad Shah had retraced his steps, the fort of Batnol would be easily surrendered to him.

Ahmad Shah of Gujarat naturally turned back and marched to the relief of Batnol. Immediately, as this news was conveyed to the Bahmani Sultan, he redoubled his efforts to take the fort,

[1] It is difficult to locate this fort. Chroniclers give variant readings. Nizam-u'd-din has "Ranthol" and "Tambol" while Firishtah give "Basal" or "Beul". *Mahmud Shahi* has 'Bahsul' or 'Beul'. No fort of like name is to be found in eastern Khandesh or its border. Bhusawal, the modern junction town cannot obviously be meant because, it is too far to the east; and moreover, it was in Khandesh. Sir Denisson Ross has therefore suggested "Batnol" on the Deccan-Khandesh border, which seems correct. (GI I, 327 & IV, 189; TA III, 120; TMS, 146; CHI III, 299).

[2] From here onwards there is great variation in the accounts of chroniclers particularly in their two sections on Bahmanides and Gujarat. Sir Wolseley Haig terms the account given by Firishtah in his Bahmani section as "wholly misleading," while the one given by the same author in Gujarat is said to be the "true version". An account, drastically abridged and probably not free from being edited, is furnished by *Mahmud Shahi* too. In fact, the most satisfactory version, as mentioned by Sir Denisson Ross, has been given by the two authors, Nizam-u'd-din and Firishtah in their sections on Gujarat (GI I, 327 & IV, 189; TA III, 120; TMS, 146; CHI III, 299 & 400).

distributed gifts and robes among his soldiers and in particular, urged his footmen, *paiks*, to make strenuous efforts at escalading the fort. A party was urged to make the attempt and in the dark got inside the fort; but before they could throw open the gate to the assailants, the commandant, Malik Sa'adat came upon them and they were cut to last men. The besieged also then issued out and caused great havoc amongst the besiegers.[1]

Ahmad Shah of Gujarat in the meanwhile arrived at the scene and the Bahmani Sultan had to turn back to meet the new threat. At this moment, he impressed upon his nobles and his soldiers, the seriousness of the engagement about to take place; that they had allowed the army of Gujarat to get the better of them on several occasions and if they failed this time too, they could even lose their own kingdom. The two Sultans then encamped facing each other across what appears to have been a small river.[2]

The armies did not engage immediately and a relatively prolonged wait ensued: in fact, neither Sultan appeared to be too willing to begin the conflict. The scruples of making war on a fellow-Muslim sovereign stood in the way, and as the delay lengthened, negotiations naturally commenced. Ahmad Shah of Gujarat suggested that he would be satisfied with the restoration of *status quo ante bellum*, if Ahmad Shah Bahmani withdrew from Batnol; Ahmad Shah Bahmani, with two defeats to compensate, was not willing to let off matters so lightly.[3]

The consequence was that the inevitable conflict ensued. The battle raged furiously from morning till evening but remained indecisive. Darkness brought a cessation and the armies retired to their former positions: and in the cover of darkness, Ahmad Shah Bahmani, whose troops had suffered severely during the day, thought discretion to be the better part of valour and decided to retreat back to his own land. Tardily and by implication, he thus accepted the terms which his adversary had earlier offered to him peacefully.[4]

[1] TA III, 120; GI IV, 189.

[2] TMS, 46: In *Mahmud Shahi* it is called the Tapti, which appears to be an error for that river was much to the north.

[3] This is not given in the Gujarat section: GI I, 327; TMS, 146.

[4] According to *Mahmud Shahi*, the gallants on either side were prevented by the river in the middle from engaging; and the learned men and theologians impressed upon the wisdom of the Sultans, the "lights of Islam", the harmfulness of mutual fighting. TMS, 146.

Ahmad Shah, left free and ostensibly victorious, repaired to the fort of Batnol where he munificently honoured the valiant defender. Afterwards he returned to his capital, *via* Nandot, again not forgetting to ravage it.[1]

[1] TA III, 122; GI IV, 190.

Chapter XIII

RAJPUTS: THE POLITICAL ORDER OF AHMAD SHAH

Rajputs & Ahmad Shah: Idar—Campaign in Rajputana—Nature of Relationship—Rajput states: within and without Gujarat—Rajput resistance—Pattern and features of the conflict—Rajput defence mechanism—Administrative System—Land revenue—Central administration—Justice—Ahmad Shah: an appreciation

THE RELENTLESS war against the Rajputs which had commenced since the accession of Ahmad Shah was resumed immediately after his return from Malwa. In fact, it would be an error to say it was resumed—for during the conflict with the Sultan of Malwa, Champanir had to bear the brunt of the Sultan's zeal when he was either proceeding to or returning from Malwa. In similar fashion, when the Sultan proceeded to the south-east, Nandot which lay on the way did not escape being ravaged.

It is a striking tribute to the resiliency of the Rajput socio-political system that these serious blows left no abiding impression on them. Even the establishment of Muslim authority in their capital towns was brief and transitory. Not until the reign of the greatest of the Sultans of Gujarat did the petty state of Champanir lose its independence; and it required the installation of the capital city at that place to liquidate fully the genesis of Rajput control. In none of the other major Rajput states did the influence of the Muslim sovereign remain as anything but fleeting.

In 829/1426, the offensive against Idar was taken up in real earnest. The intention of the Sultan was to break up this nucleus of trouble and punish its ruler Rao Punja the successor of Rao Ranmal who had fought against Ahmad Shah earlier. Moreover, he had not sent any tribute for the last several years.[1] All the gains which Muzaffar Shah won during several hard-fought campaigns appeared to have been lost after his death.

A force was therefore despatched to reduce the Rajput chief. Rao Punja came in conflict with this force and seems to have pre-

[1] TA III, 113; GI IV, 187; MS, 56-7.

vailed against it for immediately after, the Sultan himself took the field against him.[1] The seriousness with which he viewed the task of reducing the Rajput state is indicated by the fact of founding a new town after his name on the banks of the Hathmati and proposing to stay there till the successful conclusion of his task. The foundations of Ahmadnagar (now called Himmatnagar) fortress were laid; the Sultan took up his station and his troops were dispersed over the Idar area, ravaging and laying waste the land.

The reduction of a massive citadel like Idar was however not easy task.[2] Rao Punja also fought tenaciously, adopting guerilla tactics of hide and seek and of harassing the enemy troops as much as possible. Soon however he discovered that Ahmad Shah was not to be moved from his purpose and also that he did not have the resources to cope with the invader. He sent envoys to Ahmad Shah suing for peace and offered to pay a large ransom besides the regular tribute. The Sultan who had determined not to be content with anything less than Rao Punja's annihilation, rejected the overtures and advanced to lay siege to the fort of Idar.[3]

The advance compelled Rao Punja to abandon Idar and take refuge in his hill fort of Bijanagar. The Sultan advanced to Idar, occupied outskirts of the city and ravaged them; he then returned to his camp at Ahmadnagar.[4]

Next year in 830/1426-7, the fort of Ahmadnagar was completed, and the Sultan resumed the offensive. Troops were again despatched to lay Idar waste and the Sultan himself advanced to the ramparts of that hill-town. Rao Punja had in the meanwhile made serious efforts to augment his strength;[5] when the Sultan approached again, he tried frantically to conciliate Ahmad Shah and ward him off by the payment of ransom and tribute. Ahmad Shah however felt, as chroniclers tell us, that reasons of state prevented him from taking any but the extreme steps in relation to this incurable rebel.

The pressure of the Sultan made Rao Punja abandon his capital once more and he took refuge in the hills harassing the Sultan's army. In this tussle, on Jamad I. 5, 831/February 29, 1428, he

[1] TA III, 113.

[2] Commissariat gives an excellent description of the town and its monuments, together with a description of the fort and its impregnability, *op. cit.*, 84-6.

[3] TA III, 113: GI IV, 187.

[4] He did not return to Ahmedabad in this interval.

[5] GI IV, 187.

met his end. A foraging party was surprised by Rao Punja and his men, who captured an elephant of the royal train and took it with themselves. They however discounted the loyalty of the *mahawat*, the elephant-driver; as they fled carrying the elephant with them, followed by the Sultan's troops, they came to a narrow deep ravine with a precipice which had only a narrow ledge permitting a single horseman to get across. As Rao Punja entered this pass, the faithful elephant-driver drove his animal at him, due to which Rao Punja's horse shied and the rider and the horse went down into the ravine. Next day, his head was recovered and brought into Ahmad Shah's presence; a former attendant of his identified it with the remark, "Yes, this is the head of Rao-ji". Some of Ahmad Shah's attendants did not appreciate the addition of the respectful suffix; but the Sultan himself commended the man on his sense of loyalty.[1]

The Sultan marched into Idar and with the arch-rebel dead, his task for the time being was accomplished. Narayan Rao, Rao Punja's heir made his submission, was duly forgiven and installed in his father's place on the condition of paying a heavy tribute of three lakhs of silver tankas.

After leaving Malik Hasan, ennobled as Safdar-u'l-mulk, in the *thanah* of Ahmadnagar, the Sultan returned to his capital.[2] On the way, he made a detour into the hilly country on the Gujarat-Mewar border, ravaging the lands and destroying the villages.[2]

The very next year, however, trouble with Idar broke out afresh. Some of the Sultan's attendants were asked to collect their dues from Narayan Rao but when they approached him, he delayed in making the payment, putting it off by various excuses. In the meanwhile, he learnt that Ahmad Shah himself was preparing to march to Idar; the result was that filled with alarm, he himself fled from Idar and took refuge in the forest. When this news reached the Sultan, he marched to Idar with a large retinue, entering it on Safar 4, 832/November 13, 1428. He stayed there for some time, laid the foundations of a Jami mosque and then returned to the capital.[3]

After his return from the successful conclusion of his south-eastern

[1] TA III, 114; GI IV, 187; MS 57; Bayley, 111; *Rasmala* I, 334.
[2] TA III, 114; GI IV, 187.
[3] TA III, 114; GI IV, 188. Nizam-u'd-din describes these events in some detail.

affairs, Ahmad Shah undertook a campaign against the north-east, which the chroniclers have described as one to conquer Mewat and Nagor. It was begun in Rajab 836/February-March 1433.[1]

The purpose of the campaign was twofold, firstly, it was to bring back his cousins, the rulers of Nagor into a proper spirit of respect towards the senior branch of the family. It was at this time ruled by Shams Khan, the younger brother of his grandfather, who had warned him of the machinations of Hoshang Shah immediately after his accession. Secondly, Ahmad Shah also wanted to prosecute a religious-political war against his northern neighbours, the Rajputs, who not only supported the Rajput disaffected elements in Gujarat but also offered them shelter in time of trouble. The kingdom most in contact with Gujarat was Mewar, with its capital in Chittor, ruled at this time by Rana Mokal, father of the famous Rana Kumbha.

Ahmad Shah entered Mewar by the south, probably somewhere west of Dungarpur; and as soon as he reached Mewar territory, sent out detachments ravaging the countryside.[2] Skirting the hills that separate Mewar from Gujarat, he reached Dungarpur, a small Rajput state situated on the border of Rajputana, Gujarat and Malwa. Its ruler Maharawal Gopinath (*circa* 1483/1426-1506/1449) is reported by his inscription to have seized the wealth of the Sultan of Gujarat after destroying his immense army;[3] but this evidently is an exaggeration. Muslim chroniclers picture him to have saved himself by submitting and paying tribute which is too much on the other side.[4] The truth appears to be that Ahmad Shah entered Dungarpur, camped there and probably threatened the ruler who nevertheless avoided fighting and let him pass through without giving any overt token of submission.[5]

[1] TA III, 123; GI IV, 190.

[2] *Tabaqat* has two variants: Harpore or Mewar. No Harpore in the area is traceable. The sentence therefore appears to read: "As the Sultan reached the towns in Mewar . . .". Firishtah omits this altogether. TA III, 123; GI IV, 190.

[3] Ojha, *History of Rajputana*, Vol. III, Part I, 65.

[4] TA III, 123; GI IV, 190.

[5] It is quite possible on the other hand that the Muslim chroniclers are correct and Rawal Gopinath did save himself by offering tribute as an insignia of subordination; and that the passage in the inscription was deliberately inserted to camouflage this incident which was evidently not very flattering to the ruler.

Leaving Dungarpur, Ahmad Shah avoided the powerful fort of Chittor and passed to the western zone of Mewar territory, ostensibly for no other purpose than to destroy the temples of Kelwarah, Jilwarah and Dilwarah;[1] another objective could have been to destroy the lands of an enemy which was gradually becoming traditional, namely Mewar. Rana Mokal of Mewar (*circa* 1478/1421-1490/1433) immediately proceeded to meet him but before he could reach the invader, he was assassinated by his own followers.[2]

Leaving Mewar in his wake, Ahmad Shah entered the land of the Rathors, namely, Marwar; here also, Muslim chroniclers aver, he received the tributes of numerous Rathor chieftains. Passing through the arid lands of modern Jodhpur, Ahmad Shah reached Nagor, then held by his aged grand-uncle Shams Khan Dandani, who had been instrumental, if Ahmad Shah remembered, in encompassing the death of his father, and one who had also warned him of the designs of Hoshang Shah of Malwa.

Shams Khan Dandani had no wish to challenge the over-lordship of the senior branch of his family; and as Ahmad Shah approached Nagor, he came out of the city, welcomed him and offered several lakhs of tankas as *peshkash*. This voluntary acknowledgement pleased the Sultan; generously, he waived the present back and confirmed his grand-uncle in his city.[3]

His mission accomplished, the Sultan turned back towards his capital. It is not known what route he took but it must have been the one by which he came, except that, he would have passed through the Abu pass. Festivities and liberal distribution of robes and *jagirs* for those who had rendered notable services, marked the conclusion of a successful campaign; for some years, the Sultan stayed in Ahmedabad before he undertook his last campaign into Malwa.

During his reign, Ahmad Shah waged a unfinished war of attrition against the Rajputs. In a way, it was necessary; petty but numerous centres of Rajput authority had to be broken before the Sultanate could become a reality. Political ends thus got interlinked with religious directives: and Ahmad Shah earned a reputation which he probably would not have resented, namely, one of fanaticism

[1] Vide *supra* 149-50 fn. [2] Ojha, *op. cit.*, II, 589-90.
[3] TA, III, 123; GI IV, 190.

and vandalism so far as Hindu worship and Hindu religion were concerned.

This over-all religious attitude nevertheless requires close attention; especially necessary it is to distinguish the political strands, so far as possible, in order to appreciate the role played by culture directives distinct from political necessities.

The Rajput powers against whom Ahmad Shah carried on a life-long duel, can be broadly divided into three categories. With each one, a different policy was required and a different policy was therefore followed.

The first tier of Rajput states can be said to consist of "foreign" states, namely, those which were outside Gujarat and its environs and were independent in the same fashion as Malwa and Khandesh were. Such were for example, Mewar, Dungarpur, Haraoti states and Marwar. Relations with them were on what today we would call a "diplomatic" level, though during the reign of Ahmad Shah they never were friendly; whenever there was no conflict, there were no contacts. Whenever the Rajputs could, they helped their kinsmen inside the border, and also raided Gujarat; but such occasions were few and generally, the Rajputs outside Gujarat could not do much for the Rajputs in Gujarat except proffering sympathy.

The second type of states were the Rajput states on the border: Jhalawar, Idar, Champanir, Nandot. Control of these states, constituents of Gujarat area and within its periphery, was vital for the defence of the Sultanate. On their part, these states were vitally interested in the power which was supreme in Gujarat and could not view but with apprehension, the establishment of a strong Muslim power-nucleus in Gujarat. The struggle therefore had to be of crippling nature for anyone of them; and though the Rajputs were evidently the weaker of the two, they kept up the struggle throughout the reign of Ahmad Shah. None of the states was permanently disabled despite heavy blows and any suitable opportunity found them ready to take advantage of the Sultan's weakness. The task which Ahmad Shah initiated remained incomplete till the accession of his great successor Mahmud Begada.

Similarly situated was the peninsula of Saurashtra, hardly touched by Muslim conquest. At the most, the rulers had agreed to pay *salami*, an exaction which remained nothing more than a baro-

meter of the Sultan's strength. No indentation in the defence system of the peninsula could be made during the reign of Ahmad Shah; that task too was consummated in the reign of Mahmud Begada.

Finally, in a much more unfortunate predicament were the Rajput principalities situated in the Heartland of the Sultanate, namely, in central and north Gujarat. On them descended the full weight of the Sultan's authority which set in motion a process leading to their expropriation. The first phase of this process had begun, though tardily, under Alp Khan; the subsequent internecine struggle in the ruling Muslim groups had halted it for nearly half a century. Now with the rise of an independent nucleus, deriving its power and sustenance from this land exclusively, the struggle commenced afresh.

The pattern of this struggle, the short-sighted heroism and valour with which the Rajputs faced this offensive, has been graphically recounted in the *Rasmala*. The conflict was bitter and long but not uniform; the pressure was naturally great near the seat of government while distance conferred an immunity. Dispossession was greatest in central Gujarat and in the environs of Ahmedabad. The conflict veered round to two main objectives—land and women, both combining into a central consideration of honour and prestige. The conqueror inexorably demanded, more often forcibly wrested, what he considered was his due from a conquerored subordinate; he needed land and he needed women. To the Rajput, it was a indignity worse than death to surrender either his land or his daughter; not only his livelihood but his honour, his manhood was at stake. The sneer of Ukho at the Waghelas—". . . there is no Rajput among them . . . or they would have recovered their lands (*gras*) within three days"[1]—was a sentiment which was shared by most Rajputs.

Yet it was significant that each Rajput chief had to fight for his *gras* individually; nowhere, at this stage, is there found a single occasion when they could make a common cause. Eventual subjugation was therefore inevitable and the struggle thus ended with the Rajputs reconciling themselves—though not without a serious division and splintering—to the new socio-political order.

Land was the major cause of conflict. The new rulers needed

[1] *Rasmala* I, 317.

land for themselves and their followers. In consequence, the pressure exerted on the Rajputs was intense in the central area; inevitably, the dispossessed Rajput responded by turning *bahewatea* a free booter and despoiling the land from which he had been expelled. Numerous pockets of resistance developed, made possible by the plentiful fortresses dotting the countryside and the absence of facile means of communication. Nowhere was the superficiality of Muslim control over the country demonstrated more effectively than in this sporadic yet widespread struggle, occurring in the heart of their domain.[1]

Muslim chroniclers record the measures undertaken for quelling these disturbances. A number of new forts were erected and old ones repaired; garrisons were placed and the area of operations steadily extended.[2] The strengthening of central control which grew with the augmentation of the Sultan's authority thus drove the Rajputs into a steadily narrowing compass. Resistance became progressively difficult and only the most determined found it impossible to compromise.

Linked to this demand for the Rajput's land was the demand for the Rajput's daughter. The practice was no new one; the Sultan's of Delhi had demanded similar offerings to their authority; in fact, the Sultan of Gujarat had themselves sprung from such a union, though it had been voluntary one. Not so welcome was the proffered alliance to the aristocrat Rajput who fell not only in the social estimate but in his own, by making this disgraceful surrender.

Many factors prompted this requisition. Sheer concupiscence was one, for the Sultans, as Ahmad Shah, were no saints; *per contra*, they revelled in beautiful women and in the flush of success, saw no reason to check their urge. Moreover, a daughter from a vanquished house marked a living symbol of their prowess and as such contributed to their vanity.

Political implications of such alliances, moreover, were of no mean value. It linked the allying Rajput house indissolubly to the Sultan by making the Rajput an outcaste among his people or at least, by degrading him among his compeers. Once so compromised, the Rajput was ready to profit by the alliance and gain political advantage, and also become instrumental in bringing other Rajputs into the fold. A new class of Rajput-Muslims, the *mole-*

[1] *Rasmala* I, 316-7; also refer footnote on page 316.
[2] *Supra* p. 182. MS, 52; TA III, 108-9.

salam, was born out of these alliances between the Muslim aristocracy and the Rajput, aristocracy[1] and thus was created a support for the Sultanate which was far more reliable than the Rajput would otherwise have been.

In course of time, as relations crystallised, this practice, though not given up, was limited to few houses only; powerful rulers like those of Idar were not compelled to render this tribute. Furthermore, it came to be exercised only in the aftermath of war ; the vanquished surrendered his daughter as a mark of defeat. But before that state could be reached, a great cleavage had been created in not only the Rajput, but also in Hindu society as a whole; a sudden spurt of Muslim population had taken place, a large percentage of which was comprised of those people, ostracised from their castes for accidental or misfortune-begotten contact with the rulers and their co-religionists.

The *Rasmala* stories reflect also the defence mechanism developed by the Rajputs in the face of this challenge to their livelihood and honour. Compromise inevitably brought a stigma—Samunt Singh of Beolah's condemnation of the dishonour courted by the Waghela brothers in marrying their sister to the Sultan was an expression of a widely-held opinion. His own act was much more worthy of a Rajput; and it can be safely stated that the Waghela brothers shared the opinion of their compeers regarding their behaviour—and, therefore, resented it.

Rawal Satrasalsingh of Matar also reflected the same sentiment when he preferred death to the dishonour thoughtlessly invited by his wife; and his daughter, in the palace of the Sultan, was truly symbolic of the resignation with which a Rajput maiden courted a life-long exile as the just retribution of her unwonted degradation.[2]

It is nevertheless evident that the sacrifice demanded by the unwritten code of the Rajputs was tantamount to self-annihilation. After all, the Waghela brothers did not surrender their sister willingly; the condemnation which they therefore received made them adhere more closely than they would otherwise have done to the alliance and also attempt to degrade others to their level. For no fault of theirs, the elder brother of Raniba—and with him Rajputs

[1] *Rasmala* I, 326: For instance, the elder son of Satrasalji or Matar; also *Rasmala* I, 327-8.

[2] *Rasmala* I, 316-328.

of fifty-two villages—lost their caste. Rajput bravery was undoubtedly spectacular,—but Rajput social and political sense, it must be said, was regrettably circumscribed. It sacrificed what it could have reclaimed. It exchanged substance for form and made its own people its most bitter enemies.

The framework of the administrative system created by Ahmad Shah was hammered out in the midst of this struggle. It was of necessity based upon the land-relations forged during these days.

It has to be understood therefore that the purpose of this machinery was to secure for the conquerors the maximum amount of return from the land, the upper limit being that at which cultivation became burdensome and could be abandoned. A secondary purpose was the maintenance of law and order without which no government could function.

It is with this postulate in mind that Sikandar writes the few words which furnish us with a tantalising glimpse of the lines on which this governing order was being framed. The Army was the first object of attention, for on the satisfaction of the soldier depended the authority of the Sultan. Each soldier was given a land grant equivalent to half his pay, while the other half was dispensed in cash from the royal treasury. The purpose of this dual arrangement was, as Sikandar writes: "...if the whole amount was paid in cash, it would be of no benefit (i.e. the men would spend it recklessly) and the men would be found unprepared with their equipments, and would take no interest in the defence of their country. Whereas, if half the remuneration was given by *jagir*, the men would get fodder and wood, milk, curds, and goats from their own lands and would be in comfort. They would engage in agriculture and build themselves houses. They would, by these means themselves benefit and would also be interested heart and soul in the protection of the country."[1]

The land grant was thus made not only to provide the soldier with a stable income but to give him a stake in the country, a necessity for the soldiery which was recruited mainly in the North. These soldiers were ostensibly given the lands of which the Rajputs were deprived of by the *wanta* tenure; in the countryside therefore they became a counterpoise to the prevailing influence of the Rajputs. The introduction of this element into the lower echelons

[1] MS, 57-8; Bayley, 112.

of land ownership was an statesmanlike act which served to give the Sultanate roots in its land.

It seems very improbable that this system of payment was extended to any but the troops maintained and paid by the Sultan directly. The tenor of the passage suggests this ; moreover, the maintenance of their contingents was the responsibility of the nobles for which they received *iqta'as* and though they would have emulated the pattern set by the Sultan, it need not have been necessarily so.

It is difficult to estimate the economic relations between the Sultan and his nobles, especially when the information is so limited and so much depended on personal equation. The basic pattern nevertheless seems to be evident. The nobles held large tracts of land on payment of quit-rent, very akin to the tribute paid by the Rajput rulers to the Sultan. The rebellions in the beginning of Ahmad Shah's reign point out that in their own *iqta'as*, they were able to build up their power independent of the Sultan, and the fact that this state of affairs continued even after Ahmad Shah's death is proved by the deposition of his son and heir by the nobles. The contingents recruited and paid by the nobles owed personal loyalty to their chiefs and were prepared to follow them against the Sultan if need be.

It can therefore be seen that the administrative arrangements made by Ahmad Shah did not affect the nobles and their lands. This surmise is supported by another fact. The *wanta* tenures by which the Rajputs were dispossessed and had to yield their lands to the newcomers, were restricted to central Gujarat and the area in the vicinity of the capital—the territory which formed the *khalsah* land of the Sultan. Had this expropriation gone deeper, the hyperbolic statement of Firishtah would have been amply justified, namely, 'the name of *gras* and *mawas* were no longer heard of,' —which certainly was not the case.[1]

What arrangements the nobles made for the payment of their troops, cannot be accurately ascertained for want of information. It appears probable that they exacted tribute from the smaller Rajput landholders in their land or farmed out villages in the fashion of Marathas who came later. It seems certain, however, that no large-scale alteration was made by them—after the *wanta* tenure—in the pattern of land administration which obtained during

[1] GI IV, 184-5.

their days; mostly they contented themselves by being an additional beneficiary of the system. Some displacement took place, the personnel of the system changed, but no intrusive element which could radically disrupt the old balance and initiate a fresh one was introduced in any other part of Gujarat except in that part which was the nucleus and the preserve of the Sultan. The cash grant to the soldiers was paid regularly, month by month, after a roll call in which it was verified that each man was present. This cash was utilised for current expense. When the army had to proceed on a campaign which required special equipment and preparations, special allowances were made from the royal treasury probably against the returns he got from his land. His family was maintained also by this return during his absence.[1]

Arrangements were also made for the collection of land revenue, evidently from the *khalsah* land under the direct control of the Sultan, for the Rajput chiefs paid what can be called a quit-rent, namely *salami*, for their lands and the Muslim *amirs* made a very similar payment called the *peshkash* for theirs.

The ingenious system of checks and balances which was adopted for this work, in which a great deal of embezzlement appears to have taken place, is described by Sikandar: "As regards financial officers, it was made a rule that there was to be one dependent of the Sultan, together with another man of a good family; for if both were men of good family they would probably become intimate, would form a league with each other, and give themselves up to peculation. If both were dependants of the Sultan, the case would be worse still . . . The collectors of the *parganah* also were to be appointed upon the same principle . . ."[2]

It may be doubted if collusion was impossible between these two classes of men even, where the deep temptation of personal gain was the prompter. This system is said to have been followed during the whole of the Sultanate era; but how it functioned, we are not told. Some sort of cooperation must have evolved unless of course, it may have been, that administration was frequently hamstrung by disputes among the two compeers. Administration by a system of checks and balances is not a very healthy practice; it makes for delay, inefficiency and even corruption. The very fact that it was allowed to operate so long indicates that the Sultans of Gujarat

[1] MS, 58-9; Bayley, 112-3. [2] MS, 58-9; Bayley, 113.

failed in creating a healthy administrative system—though it must also be remembered that bureaucratic administration did not have a wide prevalence in that age.

Due to a complete lack of information, it is idle to speculate on the central administrative machinery created by Ahmad Shah. The fact that he had a full paraphernalia of officials essential to a medieval court, is evident. Nizam-u'l-mulk, the *wazir*, was the most powerful man in the realm next to the Sultan; he acted as the Regent whenever the Sultan was away on his expeditions, as for instance in Malwa.

We hear of other officers too being deputed for definite tasks: thus two brothers Syed Abu'l Khair and Syed Qasim were stationed to receive the *salami* from the chieftains of Saurashtra; Taj-u'l-mulk was appointed to the administration of *jiziya*; Malik Hasan was left in Modasa to collect *salami* from Narayan Rao of Idar. Later, royal princes were deputed to expeditions against the Bahamani Sultans. Numerous nobles accompanied the Sultan in his campaigns.

The *Rasmala* narrative throws a curious light on this administration when it mentions that two *vanias*, Manikchand and Motichand, were ministers of the Sultan. Besides, a Brahmin was also employed, though for the specific work of searching a bride for the Sultan fit to replace the one he had lost.[1]

The elevation of these two persons belonging to an urban commercial community is significant; though bardic tradition is its only base, yet it is not impossible. It is the beginning of a significant trend, the high water mark of which was reached in Malik Gopi, the influential Brahmin minister of Mahmud Begada and of his son and successor.

We have already had occasion to mark the facility with which the predominantly commercial community of the Jains adapted itself to the changed pattern of political relations. By the time of Ahmad Shah, the process had evidently gone further; urban Hindu elements had begun to cooperate actively in the business of governance.

Primarily, these classes depended for their livelihood on trade and official patronage. It was necessary for them to gain the favour of powers that be. The Sultans also discovered the necessity of

[1] *Rasmala* I, 318 & 324.

inducting these indigenous elements into the hierarchy of governance, though only at a secondary and executive level. Very much earlier than had been the case in Delhi, non-Muslim elements pushed themselves into the administrative framework of the Sultanate and became constituent elements of what ultimately became a polyglot polity.

Simultaneously with the creation of this framework, Ahmad Shah instilled into it a spirit of unrelenting justice. Religion apart, Ahmad Shah laid down that a Sultan had to be a stern and impartial ruler, and justice was not only to be given but it was also to be demonstrated that it had been given. In pursuance of this logic, he ostentatiously executed his son-in-law for murder and by a clever piece of induction, discovered a murderer who also felt the weight of his authority. Sikandar writes that except these two, "no one attempted any others during the reign of Sultan Ahmad Shah"[1]—but this can hardly be credited.

"Sultan Ahmad," wrote Bayley, "was doubtless from the Muhammedan point of view, almost a pattern monarch. He was wise administrator, the people prospered under the administration he had formed. . . . He appears too, to have strictly enforced the law. He was an active and successful soldier, ready for the most part to assist a Muhammedan friend; ready, also, with or without pretence to attack an idolatrous neighbour and to extirpate idol-worship wherever he could. No doubt, his Hindu neighbours and subjects looked upon the matter in a somewhat different light."[2]

The religiosity of Ahmad Shah, though slightly exaggerated by Bayley, undoubtedly forms his chief characteristic. His relations with Hoshang Shah of Malwa and Ahmad Shah Bahmani testify that Islam did not, after all, form a bond which could not be broken, and that political interests, more often than not, transcended considerations of faith.

Nevertheless, the temptation to explain the entire religious policy of Ahmad Shah on political grounds, has to be resisted. Other things being equal, Ahmad Shah welcomed a war in the interests of his faith; in this, he was being a Muslim monarch of his age, of the same pattern as Hoshang Shah and Mahmud Shah of Malwa and Firuz Shah and Ahmad Shah Bahmani. It is impossible to unmesh the tangled skein of motivations, though it

[1] MS, 61; Bayley, 127. [2] Bayley, 127.

can be stated without reserve, that in case of conflict, political considerations always took precedence, e.g. in case of Hoshang Shah and the Rajput rulers of Gujarat, and Ahmad Shah and his compromise with the Rajputs.

Throughout his life, as Sikandar writes, Ahmad Shah felt conscious of the guilt-complex associated with the murder of his grandfather.[1] Like Aurangzeb later, whose religiosity can be understood by reference to the guilty acts by which he had come to the throne, Ahmad Shah could never exonerate himself sufficiently to feel morally at ease. His excessive attachment to saints partly stemmed from this feeling, as also his iconoclastic attitudes to other faiths.

With all his shortcomings, Ahmad Shah was nevertheless a remarkable and a successful ruler. By founding the city of Ahmedabad, a living testimony to his genius to the present day, he broke away from the tradition of Patan to lay the foundations of the Sultanate of Gujarat. By force and by policy, he successfully accomplished this task. He had inherited a parlous authority; he bequeathed an established domain, well-ordered and secure, in which the patterns of administration were already in evolution. Had it not been for anything else, this achievement would have been sufficient to win for Ahmad Shah a high place not only in the rulers of Gujarat but among those of India as well.

But above all, the fame of Ahmad Shah rests on the city which he founded and the architectural style which began with it. Probably, not even Ahmad Shah could have foreseen the greatness which his city was to attain; it was to retain, even after the age of its founders had passed, its position as the premier city of Gujarat. Its wealth was to become proverbial in the age of the Mughals; its industry likewise has become a byword in a subsequent and a more mundane age.

Ahmad Shah lived for nearly three years after his return from the Malwa campaign against Mahmud Shah. He passed away in Ahmedabad, his capital on Rabi II. 4, 846/August 12, 1442.[2] He

[1] MS, 28-9.

[2] Sikandar gives AH 845 which is wrong, for coins of Ahmad Shah dated 846 are found. The correct date is given by Firishtah and Nizam-u'd-din and in *Salatin-i-Gujarat* which gives the year correctly, though it mentions the month wrongly. (TA III, 124; GI IV, 190; *Salatin-i-Gujarat*, fol. 7a; MS, 59.) See also Bayley, p. 125 footnote.

was interred in the heart of his city, on the east side of the Jāmi *masjid*, in a mausoleum which was to contain subsequently the remains of his son and grandson—Muhammad bin Ahmad Shah and Qutb-u'd-din bin Muhammad Shah.

The Sultan had been born on Zil-h'ujjah 19, 793/November 17, 1391 when his grandfather was on his way to Gujarat. He ascended the throne on Ramzan 13, 813/January 10, 1411 at Patan, after assassinating his grandfather. His regnal tenure, reckoned in lunar calendar extended to 32 years 6 months and 20 days; or 31 years 7 months and 2 days by the solar calendar.[1]

[1] MS, 60; TA III, 124.

Appendix

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF EVENTS

THE KHALJIS

Dhi'l-hujjah 22, 695/October 21, 1296: Accession of 'Ala-u'd-din in Delhi.
Jamad I. 20, 698/February 23, 1299: Nusrat Khan leaves Delhi for Gujarat.
Dhi'l-qada 698/Sravan 1355/August, 1299: Turkish army reaches Gujarat.
699/1355/1299-1300: Campaign of Nusrat Khan and Ulugh Khan in Gujarat.
703/1360/1303-04: Second Invasion of Gujarat and expulsion of Raja Karna.
704/130-05: Appointment of Alp Khan to Gujarat.
740/1304-05: First attack on Jalor.
Dh'il-hujjah 21, 710/Vaishakha sudi 8, 1368/May 11, 1311: Fall of Jalor.
Ramdan 713/December, 1313-January, 1314: Petlad mosque Inscription.
712/1369/1312-13: Ravagement of Shatrunjaya temples.
714/1371/1314-15: Renovation of Shatrunjaya temples by Samra Sah.
Mid. 715/October-November, 1315: Departure of Alp Khan from Gujarat.
Ramdan 715/December 1315: Assassination of Alp Khan in Delhi.
Shawwal 7, 715/January 8, 1316: Death of 'Ala-u'd-din.
Shawwal 7, 715-Muharram 19, 716/January 8, 1316-April 13, 1316: Malik Kafur supreme in Delhi.
Shawwal 715-Shaban 716/January-October, 1316: Rebellion of Alp Khan's followers in Gujarat
Muharram 19, 716/April 13, 1316: Assassination of Malik Kafur.
Muharram 20, 716/April 14, 1316: Accession of Mubarak Shah.
Jamad II. 17, 716/September 6, 1316: Cambay inscription on Ikhtiyar-u'd-daula's tomb.
Shaban-Ramdan 716/October-November, 1316: Ain-u'l-mulk reaches Gujarat and defeats the rebels.
Dhi'l-qada 716-Rabi I. 717/January-June, 1317: Governorship of Malik Dinar in Gujarat.
Rabi I. 717-Muharram 718/June 1317-March 1318: Husam-u'd-din in Gujarat.
Muharram-Safar 718/March-April: Appointment of Taj-u'l-mulk to Gujarat.
Muharram 5, 718/March 9, 1318: Jalor mosque inscription.
Jamad II. 1, 720/July 9, 1320: Assassination of Mubarak Shah.
Shaban 1, 720/September 6, 1320: Execution of Khusrau by Tughuluq Shah.

THE TUGHUULUQS : TUGHULUQ SHAH AND MUHAMMAD SHAH

Shaban 1, 720/September 6, 1320: Accession of Tuguhluq Shah.
721/1321: Rebellion in Gujarat.
Dhi'l-hujja 20, 723/Pausha sudi 7, 1380/December 20, 1323: Petlad bi-lingual inscription.
Shaban 725/July 1325: Death of Tuguhluq Shah. (?)

Shaban 725/July, 1325: Accession of Muhammad Shah. (?)
Muharram 18, 725/January 4, 1325: Cambay inscription on the Jami mosque which mentions Muhammad bin Tuguhluq as the reigning Sultan.
Rabi I. 25, 726/March 1, 1326: Broach Idgah inscription.
Dhi'l-hujjah 27, 733/September 8, 1333: Dholkah Hilal Khan mosque inscription.
Safar 9, 734/October 20, 1333: Cambay inscription on the tomb of 'Umar-u'l-Kazeruni.
Dhi'l-hujjah 30, 733/October 11, 1333: Ibn Batutah crosses the Indus into India.
Rajab 13, 734/March 20, 1334: Ibn Batutah reaches Delhi.
736/1335-36: Affair of Ibn Kaulambi in Cambay (*circa*).
Dhi'l-qada 25, 740/May 23, 1340: Karkhadi bi-lingual inscription.
Muharram 25, 743/June 30, 1342: Birth of Zafar Khan bin Wajih-u'l-mulk founder of the Gujarat dynasty.
Jamad II. 11, 743/November 11, 1342: Ibn Battutah reaches Nandurbar.
Jamad II. 22, 743/November 22, 1342: Ibn Battutah reaches Cambay.
Jamad II. 27, 743/November 27, 1342: Ibn Battutah arrives in Kawa.
Jamad II. 29, 743/November 29, 1342: Ibn Battutah arrives in Gandhar (harbour near mouth of Narmada)
Rajab 3, 743/December 2, 1342: Ibn Battutah arrives in Perim.
Rajab 5, 743/December 4, 1342.: Ibn Battutah arrives in Goga and leaves Gujarat.
Safar-Rabi II. 745/June-August, 1344: Beginning of the Afghan rebellion in Gujarat.
Jamad II. 745/October-November, 1344: Malik Muqbil defeated by the rebels.
Shaban 745/December 1345: Aziz Khimmar defeated and killed.
Shaban-Ramdan 745/December 1344-January 1345: Cambay refuses admission to the rebels and is besieged.
Ramdan 26, 745/January 31, 1345: Sultan Muhammad leaves Delhi.
Shawwal 6, 745/February 10, 1345: Sultan Muhammad leaves Sultanpur.
Dhi'l-hujjah 745/April-May, 1345: Arrives in Nagor.
Muharram 746/June, 1345: Sends Malik A'zam to Broach.
Muharram-Safar 746/May-June, 1345: Halts in Nagor.
End of Safar 746/End of June, 1345: Leaves Nagor.
Mid. Rabi II. 746/Mid. August, 1345: Reaches Patan.
Jamad I.-Jamad II. 746/September-October, 1345: Arrives in central Gujarat; halts at Pandu.
Rabi I. 746/July, 1345: Malik A'zam arrives in Broach; enters the fort.
Rabi II. 746/August, 1345: Rebel forces surround the Broach fort.
Jamad I. 746/September, 1345: Rebels defeated by the Broach garrison and dispersed.
Rajab 746/November 1345: Sultan Muhammad arrives in Broach.
Rajab 746-Muharram 747/November, 1345-May, 1346: Halts in Broach.
Shaban 746/November-December, 1345: Sultan sends Lalchin to Daulatabad.
Beg. Dhi'l-qada 746/February-March, 1346: Sultan's envoy killed; proclamation of Isma'il Shah in Daulatabad.
Safar 747/June 1346: Sultan leaves Broach.
Jamad I.-Jamad II. 747/September-October, 1346: Arrives in Daulatabad.

Rajab 747/October-November 1346: Battle with the rebels.
Rajab-Dhi'l-hujjah 747/October, 1346-March, 1347: Halts in Daulatabad.
Ramdan-Dhi'l-hujjah 747/January-March, 1347: Rebellion of Taghi develops in Gujarat.
Safar 748/May 1347: Sultan arrives in Broach from Daulatabad.
Safar-Rabi I.-Rabi II. 748/May-July, 1347: Campaign against Taghi: Broach and Cambay.
Rabi II. 24, 748/August 3, 1347: Accession of 'Ala-u'd-din Bahman Shah.
Jamad I. 748/August, 1347: Sultan halts at Asawal.
Late Jamad I. 748/Beginning of September 1347: Battle of Kadi.
Jamad II. 748/September, 1347: Taghi flies to Kacchh; Sultan arrives in Patan.
Jamad II. 748-Rabi I. 749/ September, 1347-June, 1348 Sultan stays in Patan; receives Rajput chieftains and reorganises administration.
Rabi I. 749-Rajab 749: Sultan in Mandal; the first Monsoon.
Shaban 749-Rabi I. 750/October 1348-June 1349: Sultan moves against Saurashtra chieftains; reinforcements summoned from Delhi.
Rabi I. 750-Rajab 750: Sultan in Gondal; the second Monsoon.
Shaban 750-Rabi II. 751/October 1349-June 1350: Court held in Junagadh; preparations for invading Sind; reinforcements reach Sultan from Delhi; death of Malik Kabir.
Rabi II. 751-Ramdan 751/June 1350-November 1350: Sultan remains sick at Gondal; the third Monsoon.
Shawwal 751/December 1351: The Sultan leaves Saurashtra for Sind.
Muharram 10, 752/March 9, 1351: Beginning of the final sickness.
Muharram 21, 752/March 20, 1351: Death of Muhammad bin Tughuluq.

FIRUZ SHAH AND THE LATER TUGHLUQS

Muharram 23, 752/March 22, 1351: Accession of Firuz Shah.
752-3/1351-52: Appointment of Amir Miran, Nizam-u'l-mulk, *mustafi-i-mumalik* to Gujarat.
Rabi I, 1, 759/Feb 11, 1358: Death of 'Ala-u'd-din Bahman Shah: accession of Muhammad Shah.
Rabi II. 10, 762/February 17, 1361: Dholka, Jami mosque inscription.
762/1360-01: Dholka, Court Wall inscriptions.
Middle or end of 767/1365-66: Sultan Firuz starts on Sind campaign.
769/1367-68: Sultan Firuz in Gujarat.
769/1368: Leaves Gujarat; appoints Zafar Khan to Gujarat.
770/1368-69: Shams-u'd-din Abu Raja arrives in Gujarat.
771/1369-70: Cambay inscription on Khwajah Khidr's tomb.
Jamad I. 3, 774/Kartik sudi 4, 1429/October 31, 1372: Colophon in Jain work *Nalayan Mahakavya* testifying to Zafar Khan's governorship.
775/1473-74: Cambay Inscription on Zafar Khan Gustani's tomb.
773/1371-2: Death of Zafar Khan; installation of his son in his place with his titles.
775/1374-75: Appointment of Shams-u'd-din Damaghani to Gujarat.

775/1373-74: Shams-u'd-din Abu Raja leaves Gujarat for Delhi.
776/1474-75: Establishment of Malik Raja in Khandesh.
Rabi I. 22, 777/August 21, 1375: Bet (Dwarka) inscription on the shrine of Haji Pir Kirmani, mentioning Shams-u'd-din Damaghani.
Dhi'l-qada 19, 776/April 24, 1375: Death of Muhammad Shah Bahmani; accession of 'Ala-u'd-din Mujahid Shah.
Dhi'l-hujjah 12, 779/April 16, 1378: Assassination of Mujahid Shah; accession of Da'uud Shah Bahmani.
Muharram 22, 780/May 21, 1378: Assassination of Da'uud Shah; accession of Muhammad Shah II.
782/1380-81: Rebellion and Death of Shams-u'd-din Damaghani; appointment of Farhat-u'l-mulk Rasti Khan.
Shawwal 11, 783/December 30, 1381: Cambay Inscription on Bibi Fatimah's tomb.
Dhi'l-hujjah 789/December, 1387-January, 1388: Malik Yaqub, sent by Muhammad Shah to replace Rasti Khan, reaches Gujarat and is defeated and killed by Rasti Khan.
Ramdan 18, 790/September 20, 1388: Death of Firuz Shah; accession of Tughuluq Shah II.
Safar 21, 791/February 19, 1389: Assassination of Tughuluq Shah II and accession of Abu Bakr Shah.
Rabi II. 6, 791/April 4, 1389: Accession of Muhammad Shah.
Muharram 793/December 1390-January, 1391: Muhammad Shah occupies Delhi.
793/1390-91: Dilawar Khan Ghori appointed to Malwa.
Rabi I. 3, 793/February 8, 1391: Zafar Khan bin Wajih-u'l-mulk sets out from Delhi to crush the incipient rebellion of Rasti Khan and replace him.

ZAFAR KHAN (LATER MUZAFFAR SHAH)

Rabi I. 793/February 8, 1391: Departure of Zafar Khan from Delhi.
Dhi'l-hujjah 19, 793/November 17, 1391: Birth of Ahmad Khan later Ahmad Shah.
Safar 7, 794/January 4, 1392: Battle of Kambhoi; defeat of Rasti Khan.
794-5/1392-93: Zafar Khan in Patan, Cambay, Asawal; pacification of Gujarat.
Rabi I. 17, 796/January 20, 1394: Death of Muhammad Shah Tughuluq.
Rabi I 19, 796/January 22, 1394: Accession of 'Ala-u'd-din Sikandar Shah.
Jamad I. 5, 796/March 8, 1394: Death of 'Ala-u'd-din Sikandar Shah.
Jamad I. 20, 796/March 23, 1394: Accession of Nasir-u'd-din Mahmud Shah.
796/1394-95: Zafar Khan's first campaign against Idar.
Rabi I. 797/December, 1394-January, 1395: Accession of Nasir-u'd-din Nusrat Shah at Firuzabad.
797/1395: March against Nasir Khan of Khandesh to Sultanpur.
797/1395: Campaign against the chieftains of Jharand.
798/1396: First attack on Somnath; campaign in Saurashtra.
Dhi'l-hujjah 798/September, 398: Zafar Khan starts for Mandalgarh.
799-800/1396-98: Rajputana Campaign of Zafar Khan.

Ramdan 16, 800/June 2, 1398: Return to Patan.
Rajab 21, 799/April 20, 1397: Death of Muhammad Shah Bahmani; accession of Ghiyath-u'd-din Tahmatai.
Ramdan 14, 799/June 14, 1397: Assassination of Ghiyath-u'd-din; accession of Shams-u'd-din Da'uud.
Safar 24, 800/November 16, 1397: Accession of Firuz Shah Bahmani; Da'uud Shah blinded and sent to Mecca.
Rabi I. 800/November-December, 1397: Pir Muhammad besieges Kacchh.
Ramdan 19, 800/June 5, 1398: Pir Muhammad captures Multan.
Dhi'l-qada 800/July-August 1398: Clash between Iqbal Khan and Tatar Khan; latter's defeat and flight to Gujarat.
Muharram 801/September-October, 1398: Arrival of Tatar Khan in Gujarat.
801/1398-99: Zafar Khan's Second invasion of Idar.
Shawwal 22, 801/June 27, 1399: Death of Malik Rajah of Khandesh: accession of Nasir Khan.
Muharram 12, 801/September 24, 1398: Timur crosses the Indus into India.
Rabi II. 5, 801/December 15, 1398: Timur crosses the Jumna before Delhi.
Rabi II. 8, 801/December 17, 1398: Fall of Delhi.
Rabi II. 16, 801/December 26, 1398: Sack of Delhi.
Rabi II. 22, 801/January 1, 1399: Timur leaves Delhi.
Rajab 3, 801/March 11, 1399: Timur crosses the Indus.
803/1400-01: Zafar Khan's third invasion of Idar.
804/1401-02: Second attack on Somnath.
Jamad II. 806/December, 1403-January, 1404: Tatar Khan's *coup*; imprisonment of Zafar Khan and accession of Muhammad Shah, the 1st Sultan of Gujarat.
Shaban 806/February-March, 1404: Tatar Khan Muhammad Shah poisoned by his uncle Shams Khan.
Rajab 1, 807/January 3, 1405: Baroda bi-lingual inscriptions; Jama *masjid* and Navlakhi *way*.
804/1401-02: Sultan Mahmud Shah reaches Delhi from Dhar; settles at Qanauj; Iqbal Khan supreme in Delhi.
Jamad I. 19, 808/November 12, 1405: Iqbal Khan defeated and killed by Khidr Khan.
807/1404-05: Zafar Khan prepares to march against Iqbal Khan.
808/1405-06: Gives up campaign on hearing of Iqbal Khan's death.
808/1405-06: Death of Dilawar Khan Ghori; accession of Alp Khan as Hoshang Shah.
Rabi II. 810/September-October, 1407: Zafar Khan assumes regal status as Muzaffar Shah.
Jamad I. 810/October-November, 1407: Ibrahim Sharqi of Jaunpore besieges Delhi.
Rabi II.-Jamad I. 810/September-October, 1407: Muzaffar Shah proceeds to Malwa.
Shaban-Ramdan 810/January-February, 1408: Muzaffar Shah returns to Gujarat with Hoshang Shah as prisoner.
Shawwal 14, 810/March 13, 1408: Verawal bi-lingual inscription from the tomb of Maghribi Sahib.

Shawwal-Dhi'l-qada 810/March-April, 1411: Muzaffar Shah prepares to march against Ibrahim Sharqi; Ibrahim Sharqi returns to Jaunpore and Muzaffar Shah to Patan.
811/1408: Hoshang Shah released and escorted to Malwa by Ahmad Khan.
Dhi'l-qada 810/March April 1408: Sultan Mahmud recovers territory west of the Ganges.
812/1409-10: Muzaffar Shah's last campaign against Kanthkot, adjacent to Kacchh.
Early Ramdan 813/early January 1411: Assassination of Muzaffar Shah.

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Ramdan 13, 813/January 10, 1411: Accession of Ahmad Shah in Patan.
Ramdan 813/January, 1411: Rebellion of Firuz Khan in central Gujarat; battle near Cambay.
Shawwal 1, 813/January 28, 1411: Ahmad Shah and the rebels arrive in Broach,
Shawwal-Dhi'l-qada 813/February-March, 1411: Negotiations at Broach settlement; Hoshang Shah's advent and return.
Dhi'l-qada 813/February-March, 1411: Foundation of Ahmedabad.
Rabi II. 13, 814/August 6, 1411: Cambay inscription on Haji Yusuf's tomb.
Muharram-Jamad I. 814/March-August, 1411: Recrudescence of the rebellion in north Gujarat; Firuz Khan allies with Idar.
Jamad I. 5, 814/August 26, 1411: Fall of Modasa and liquidation of the rebellion.
Rajab 1, 815/October 7, 1412: Ahmedabad inscription on Jama *masjid*.
816/1413: Rebellion of Shah Malik and Shaikh Malik with Satarsal of Jhalawad.
817/1414: Ahmad Shah's campaign in Saurashtra; attacks Vanthali.
Rajab 817/September-October 1414: Return to Ahmedabad.
Shawwal 4, 817/December 17, 1414: Ahmedabad inscription on Bhadra mosque.
Safar 17, 818/April 29, 1415: Cambay inscription on Fakhr-u'd-din's tomb.
818/1415-16: Ahmad Shah imposes *jiziyah* in Gujarat; destroys the temples of Sidhpore.
819/1416-17: March to Nagor; campaign against disaffected elements.
Muharram-Rabi I. 820/March-May, 1417: Nasir Khan and Ghazni Khan lay siege to Sultanpur: Ahmad Shah marches to the affected area.
Rabi I.-Rabi II. 820/May-June, 1417: Hoshang Shah's second advent in Gujarat.
Rajab 16, 820/August 29, 1417: Ahmad Shah faces Hoshang Shah in Modasa, returning quickly from the south-east.
Rajab-Dhi'l-qada 820/August-December, 1418: Return of Hoshang Shah; despatch of Malik Baqi to Sultanpur.
Dhi'l-hujjah 1, 820/January 9, 1418: Nasir Khan surrounded in Sultanpur.
Dhi'l-hujjah 820/Muharram 821/January-February, 1418: Negotiations with Nasir Khan; Ahmad Shah bestows the red canopy on him.
Safar 821/February-March 1418: Ahmad Shah leaves Ahmedabad for first Malwa campaign.
Safar-Jamad II. 821/February-July 1418: Ahmad Shah in Malwa; the battle of Ujjain and Hoshang Shah's defeat.

Jamad II. 821/July 1418: Return to Ahmedabad.
Dhi'l-qada 1, 821/November 30, 1418: Expedition against Narsingh Deo of Champanir.
Safar 1, 822/February 27, 1419: Ahmad Shah leaves Champanir after accepting Narsingh Deo's submission.
Safar 22, 819/March 20, 1419: Lays the foundation of a fort in Sankherah.
Rabi I. 11, 822/April 7, 1419: Lays the foundation of another fort in Mankati.
Rabi I. 822/April 1419: Envoys from Hoshang Shah; Ahmad Shah drops the proposed expedition to Malwa.
Rabi II. 6, 822/May 6, 1420: Return halt at Champanir; attack on fort.
End of Rabi II. 822/May 6, 1420: Return to Ahmedabad.
823/1420-21: Repair of old forts and construction of new ones in hilly and unsubdued areas of the Sultanate.
End of 824/December 1421: Resumption of campaign against Malwa. Ahmad Shah leaves Ahmedabad.
824/1421: Ahmad Shah sends an army to help Firuz Shah Bahmani.
Safar 19, 825/February 12, 1422: Champanir; leaves after exacting tribute.
Safar 22, 825/February 15, 1422: Sankherah ; foundations of a Jami *masjid* laid.
Rabi II. 25, 825/April 5, 1422: Arrives in Mandu, after taking Maheshwar.
Rabi II. 825-Jamad II. 1, 825/5-May 24, 1422: Siege of Mandu.
Jamad II. 1, 825/May 24, 1422: Leaves Mandu for Ujjain to bivouac for the rains.
Shawwal 5, 825/September 22, 1422: Abdication of Firuz Shah Bahmani and accession of Ahmad Shah.
Ramdan 20, 825/September 7, 1422: Return to Mandu and resumption of the siege.
Shawwal 12, 825/September 29, 1422: Arrival of Ahmad Ayyaz from Ahmedabad with reinforcements.
Dhi'l-hujjah 825/November-December 1422: Arrival of Hoshang Shah and his entry into Mandu; Ahmad Shah leaves the siege of Mandu to besiege Sarangpur; Hoshang Shah follows him to Sarangpur.
Muharram 12, 826/December 26, 1422: Hoshang Shah's night-attack on Gujarat army.
Muharram 13, 826/December 27, 1422: Battle of Sarangpur; Hoshang Shah beaten.
Muharram 19, 826/January 2, 1423: Ahmedabad, 'Alamgir mosque inscription.
Rabi I. 24, 826/March 7, 1423: Ahmad Shah leaves Sarangpur for return march to Gujarat.
Rabi I.-Rabi II. 826/March-April 1423: Hoshang Shah's attack on the returning army; his defeat.
Jamad II. 4, 826/May 13, 1423: Ahmad Shah arrives in Ahmedabad.
Safar 1, 827/January 4, 1424: Ahmedabad, Jami mosque inscription.
826-829/1423-26: Stay in Ahmedabad; creation of an administrative system.
829/1426: Campaign against Idar; Rao Punja takes regfuge in Bijagarh; foundation of Ahmadnagar.
830/1426-27: Ahmadnagar fort completed: offensive against Idar resumed.
Jamad I. 5, 831/February 29, 1428: Death of Rao Punja.

831/1428: Accession of Narayan Rao, Punja's successor; Malik Hasan appōinted to Ahmadnagar; trouble with Narayan Rao.

Safar 4, 832/November 13, 1428: Ahmad Shah re-enters Idar; foundations of Jami mosque laid.

833/1429-30: Kanha of Jalor flees to Khandesh, thence to Ahmad Shah Bahmani; despatch of Prince Muhammad Khan to the southern border: battle of Daulatabad.

833/1429-30: Affair of Rai Qutb of Mahim: capture of Mahim by Bahmanis.

834/1431: Recapture of Mahim by Gujarat land and naval forces.

835/1431-32: Attack on Ahmad Shah Bahmani on the south-east border of Gujarat; arrival of Ahmad Shah in the endangered area; battle and the unsuccessful withdrawal of the Bahmani Sultan; return of Ahmad Shah to Ahmedabad.

Rajab 836/February-March 1433: Leaves Ahmedabad for campaign in Rajputana.

836-37/1433-34: The Rajputana Campaign and return to Ahmedabad.

Dhi'l-hujjah 9, 838/July 6, 1435: Death of Hoshang Shah.

Dhi'l-hujjah 11, 838/July 8, 1435: Accession of Ghazni Khan as Muhammad Shah.

Shawwal 29, 839/May 13, 1436: Accession of Mahmud Shah Khalji.

841-42/1438-39: Ahmad Shah's Malwa campaign; epidemic in his troops.

842/1439: Return to Ahmedabad.

Rabi II. 4, 846/August 12, 1442: Death of Ahmad Shah.

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